




Training trainers in mediation and restorative justice

The
Handbook
of the



Erasmus+ Mediarej  project



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1. Introduction

The restorative justice movement witnessed a major growth in the past years. Research and practices demonstrated that restorative justice (RJ) works in different areas, from serious to petty crimes, and from cases involving two people in conflict to wider communities. In line with this growth, European and international instruments call for high quality RJ practices delivered by well prepared professional trainers.

For this reason, in recent years, Europe has seen the development of very different training proposals related to restorative justice. Training addresses different types of professionals working in the criminal justice and other relevant fields (e.g., teachers, social workers) to receive a basic introduction to restorative justice to support referrals to RJ services. A more specific training also exists for RJ practitioners, focusing on basic and advanced RJ skills development. The field is still lacking specific training of trainers (ToTs) in restorative justice, who may be senior RJ facilitators willing to transfer their knowledge and skills to future RJ facilitators (or mediators).

At this stage, the main question is: who are the trainers in restorative justice? What are their professional and educational backgrounds and their specific competencies? What do (ToTs) look like in practice, in terms of format and contents? During our research, a literature review and a consultation process have allowed us to map the state of the art identifying good practices for training in restorative justice. A recurring theme is that restorative justice goes beyond the criminal justice field and it requires trainers and practitioners to embody its values as a way of living and performing in this world. Restorative justice is an inclusive and participatory approach to justice where those responsible for the harm and those who suffered such harm have the opportunity to find a solution to repair the harm. This repair is done in cooperation with a multipartial facilitator, trained to support all parties in an equal way. This is completely different from other practices (e.g. negotiations, compensation) where people stand on the opposite and conflictual position instead of attempting to sit in an open and inclusive manner. Trainers in restorative justice should use their skills as practitioners while transferring their knowledge and competencies to encourage dialogue, build trust and propose an experiential learning experience to trainees.

Why this Handbook

This Handbook is the first intellectual output delivered within the framework of the Erasmus+ project “MEDIAREJ - Training in Mediation and Restorative Justice”¹ (2020-2023). This Handbook includes a literature review (chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) and the results of the consultation process (chapters 7, 8, 9). Based on this first research phase and assuming that the research is completed: the project partners have developed a training programme for RJ trainers (in the form of activity sheets), including specific materials for training in community practices, training for complex and sensitive cases such as gender-based violence and multimedia training materials for different purposes.

¹ Although the project was planned by senior facilitators with experience in humanistic mediation, this Handbook proposes the wider notion of restorative justice, which is widely used across Europe and adopts the same values of humanistic mediation.

How to read the Handbook

Chapter 2 introduces the reader to the key concepts about restorative justice (definitions, values and standards, practices). It sets the basis for a common understanding of restorative justice. Chapter 3 focuses on training, referring to international instruments relevant for restorative justice (e.g., the EU Victims Directive; the Council of Europe Recommendation; and the UN Basic Principles). Chapter 4 explores different teaching approaches relevant for this field, zooming in on the concept of “restorative pedagogy”. This serves as the basis for further reflection on training in restorative justice. Chapter 5 proposes a literature review on the competencies and the background for trainers, while Chapter 6 focuses on the actual training implementation in terms of methods and contents.

The remaining chapters are dedicated to the results of the consultation process, namely the focus group discussion, the online survey and the interviews. Chapter 7 explains the methodology in detail and includes the results in terms of the trainer and the training programme. Chapter 8 will give a short and useful toolkit of relevant publications and training programmes that can be useful for future trainers. Chapter 9 will list some general conclusions and recommendations.

Glossary

Because of the lack of literature specific to training for restorative justice trainers, this Handbook includes references that go beyond pure “training” and thus some concepts may use different terminologies.

- **Restorative justice:** any process which enables those harmed by crime, those responsible for that harm² and possibly the community, if they freely consent, to participate in the resolution of matters arising from the offence, through the help of a trained facilitator. Restorative justice makes use of different methods (e.g., mediation³) with the aim of achieving a consensual and co-constructed form of justice.
- **Facilitators:** those trained to facilitate different restorative justice practices (e.g., mediator, conferencing, circles). Depending on the literature, these may be referred to as mediators or practitioners in the text.
- **Trainers:** those who instruct participants in a training course giving them guidance and working together with their audience. Depending on the literature, these may be referred to as instructors, supervisors or teachers in the text.
- **Trainees:** those who received guidance and instructions as participants in a training course. Depending on the literature, these may be referred to as students, participants, or learners in the text.

2 Those harmed by crime, and those responsible for that harm, may be referred as victims and offenders in the text, for easy reading, as these labels are normally avoided in restorative justice practices.

3 Within this literature review, the research of Delattre and Willemsens (2004) only refers to “mediation” (not to restorative justice) regarding the contents of the training model.

2. What is Restorative Justice

Defining restorative justice

Due to the various definitions of restorative justice, doubts arise about which practices fit under this approach to justice and which practices do not. Over the years, definitions took different perspectives, either prioritizing the process or the outcomes of restorative justice.

Process-oriented definitions focus on the values and practice principles relevant for the restorative justice process, such as the free consent of the parties to participate and the focus on finding an agreement.

Restorative justice is a process to involve, to the greatest extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible. (Zehr, 2002)

A similar approach is also taken in the **EU Directive 2012/29/EU** of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime (hereby, EU Victims Directive). This Directive is considered a milestone in the field of victim assistance in Europe because it is a legally binding and enforceable instrument to be transposed into policy and practices by all Member States. Compared to the EU Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA on the standing of victims in criminal proceedings, the EU Victims Directive includes additional contents, such as restorative justice, and calls for an individualized approach to support and protect victims of crime.

Restorative justice means any process whereby the victim and the offender are enabled, if they freely consent, to participate actively in the resolution of matters arising from the criminal offence through the help of an impartial third party. (Art.2(1d), EU Victims Directive, 2012)

Similarly, the Council of Europe's **Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)8** of the Committee of Ministers to Member States concerning restorative justice in criminal matters (hereby, CoE Recommendation) also focuses on the process. It adopts a similar definition to the one in the EU Victims Directive, but with a crucial difference: the labels "victim" and "offender" are replaced by "those harmed by crime" and "those responsible for that harm", taking into consideration already in the definition some key practice-principles of restorative justice. The Recommendation is the most forward-thinking legal instrument in the field, calling for access to restorative justice in all cases and at all stages of criminal procedures and arguing for a cultural change in the criminal justice system to make it more restorative-oriented.

Restorative justice refers to any process which enables those harmed by crime, and those responsible for that harm, if they freely consent, to participate actively in the resolution of matters arising from the offence, through the help of a trained and impartial third party. (Rule 3, CoE Recommendation, 2018)

Early in 2002, the United Nations adopted the **UN Basic Principles** on the use of restorative justice programmes in criminal matters focusing on different practices that would fall under a "restorative process".

Restorative process means any process in which the victim and the offender, and, where appropriate, any other individuals or community members affected by a crime, participate together actively in the resolution of matters arising from the crime, generally with the help of a facilitator. Restorative processes may include mediation, conciliation, conferencing and sentencing circles. (para. 1.2., UN Basic Principles, 2002)

Outcome-oriented definitions, instead, focus on the reparation of the harm and on proposals for making justice. These definitions also reflect the position of the restorative justice movement in recent years, which focuses less on concrete practices and methods and gives attention to opportunities for restoring perceptions of justice and safety in our societies.

Restorative Justice is an approach of addressing harm or the risk of harm through engaging all those affected in coming to a common understanding and agreement on how the harm or wrongdoing can be repaired and justice achieved. (European Forum for Restorative Justice, 2018)

A similar approach is adopted in the second edition of the “Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes”, recently published by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2020). This handbook is a landmark in the field of restorative justice to further advance the implementation and application of restorative justice in criminal justice matters in many countries across the world. The definition refers to practice principles.

Restorative justice is an approach that offers offenders, victims and the community an alternative pathway to justice. It promotes the safe participation of victims in resolving the situation and offers people who accept responsibility for the harm caused by their actions an opportunity to make themselves accountable to those they have harmed. It is based on the recognition that criminal behaviour not only violates the law, but also harms victims and the community. (UNODC, 2020)

Restorative justice values and principles

The EFRJ (2018) published a manual on values and standards for restorative justice practices. This work brought together different minds from the field, including senior practitioners and researchers, that cooperated for about two years to publish “standards” and guidelines to refer to certain initiatives as restorative justice. This group concluded that the following values are core for restorative justice practices:

- Justice
- Solidarity and responsibility
- Respect for human dignity
- Truth

In general, restorative justice is based on universal values of protection of human rights and the rule of law, of non-discrimination, of equal treatment and active participation in democratic societies. **Justice** refers to the fact that restorative justice practices are either adopted to prevent injustice or to encourage people's accountability to repair the harm and "do justice" to what happened. People may perceive injustice in the form of a lack: it may be a good that is due but absent (for example, a right that is not recognized) or a good that has been taken away or broken (e.g., properties, but also non-material goods: dignity, respect, consideration). From the lack arises the demand for justice, which is always first and foremost a request for reparation and acknowledgment. **Solidarity and responsibility** go hand in hand as restorative justice aims at social cohesion and individual wellbeing through the recognition of diversity and assumption of social and personal responsibilities. In this line, restorative justice proposes to strengthen a moral responsibility for what happened in the past as much as for what could happen in the future, including the care for introducing something better into the social environment. **Respect for human dignity** is guaranteed by safe and high quality practices that assume that individuals have the intelligence and capabilities to deal with issues that matter to them. Philosophy reminds us that nobody could entirely possess one single **truth**; on the contrary there are many different points of view that only together could approximate a composite understanding of things. In this line, restorative justice creates the spaces for all perspectives to be heard with the aim of merging stories and agreeing on a potential dialogical truth born out of the encounter.

Truth in restorative justice practices

In transitional justice and restorative justice literature, different stages of the restorative justice meeting are marked by the sharing of stories and memories:

- first, the forensic and narrative truths refer to the actual measurable facts and how each individual experienced such facts;
- second, the dialogical truth emerges when the parties share in a dialogue process the facts (forensic) and subjective experiences (narrative);
- finally, the transformative truth occurs as a consequence of the dialogue transforming one's perception of what happened as a result of the recognition of the other's existence and truth.

Restorative justice literature and experts may refer to other values, all important for setting the basis of how we live together as a society, not only the basis for restorative-oriented justice systems. Certain values are relevant also for those who practice restorative justice (e.g., facilitators, mediators, trainers). **Responsibility** is the ability to respond to a person but also to a situation. It is mentioned as crucial for practitioners who must be well prepared and trained to practice their activity. This is linked to the responsibility to self-assess when facilitating a restorative justice meeting. **Humility** comes from "humus", which means "ground" and represents the ability to look at things from below and not from a position of dominance. It also represents the ability to make one-self small, not to fill the scene, to leave room for the other. It is an attitude that allows practitioners to sit and listen with a non-judgmental attitude open to respect different stories and people. In humanistic mediation (see box p. 12), this is practiced by the use of three mediators mirroring the emotions of each participant (Morineau, 1998, p.79). **Dialogue** is proposed as a method to seek for the

truth together through the gradual unveiling of the dialogical truth. The responsible work and humble attitude of the practitioner is crucial to encourage the dialogue as well as the responsibility of participants in the encounter.

These values come alive in a series of practice principles that make restorative justice a safe, well-prepared and thus high quality practice in all stages, from the offer and preparation to participate to the actual communication between the parties and the implementation of the agreement. Some practice principles⁴ in restorative justice are:

- **Free, voluntary, consensual participation:** this implies that restorative justice is based on the willingness and responsibility of all participants to engage in this process, after a well-informed preparation phase.
- **Openness:** this refers to the importance of admitting one's limits and challenges where needed, either in the role of practitioners or participants.
- **Inclusion:** this includes the flexibility to adapt and tailor the process to individual needs, capabilities and cultural background.
- **Non-judgmental attitude:** practitioners and participants are required to be open to all stories and outcomes of the restorative justice process.
- **Confidentiality:** this means that what happens in the meeting is secret, unless the parties agree differently, so that the dialogue can be authentic and honest from all sides.
- **Community involvement:** this implies that whatever happens in the meeting aims at rebuilding relationships and reconnecting with the community.

Restorative justice in practice

In Europe, the most common restorative justice practice is **victim-offender mediation**, where the direct parties meet after an individual preparation, together with a trained facilitator, to engage into a dialogue process over what happened and how to repair the harm caused. Other known practices are **restorative conferencing** (which also includes family members and friends in the dialogue process) and **restorative circles** (where larger communities gather together for a structured dialogue around a key issue that matters to them).

Restorative justice facilitators in action

In most cases, restorative justice facilitators follow some core ground rules: during the meeting, they almost disappear, remaining in silence to let the parties get back the full ownership of their conflict and, when they intervene, they provide non-directive and non-judgmental feedback based on an attentive active listening.

The only “script” followed is at the start and end of the meeting, when facilitators provide the house rules for the encounter and when they help to summarise any sort of agreement achieved and propose an eventual follow up.

⁴ The list below is not exhaustive, as it includes the practice principles mentioned by the project partners, which are also proposed in general literature about restorative justice.

The way in which these practices are conducted change according to the **areas of application** where restorative justice is used, such as within the criminal legal system or in the community, schools and family settings (namely to every context where conflict, violence and crime may occur). Practices also change according to the **legal basis** supporting (or not) access to restorative justice (especially in case this is applied within the criminal legal system) as well as to the **historical and cultural backgrounds** of how restorative justice is implemented in a given country.

Humanistic approach to mediation and restorative justice

Differences in restorative practices may also influence the way facilitators and/or mediators have a role in the process. This is the case, for example, regarding the humanistic approach to mediation and restorative justice, a specific method founded by Jacqueline Morineau (in 1980's France) and Mark Umbreit (in 1990's USA).

According to Morineau, humanistic mediation focuses on the actual meeting, which is divided into three stages which can be traced back to the structure of ancient Greek tragedy: first, the parties tell their own individual truths to each other regarding what happened (*theoria*); then, the conflict emerges and much space is given to express the drama and the emotions of what happened (*krisis*); finally, after listening to and recognising each other's suffering and feelings, a space is created for acknowledging the existence of the other and his/her truth (*katarsis*). The ancient drama was an interesting way to create an emphasised 'projection' of conflicts, also to learn how to manage them.

In the specific case of humanistic mediation, symbols and rituals are considered important for the restorative process. The encounter is planned with the presence of three mediators who act as "mirrors" for the emotions of the parties, arising from the meeting. The work of the mediators will be very subtle as during the meeting the focus will be directed towards the parties. Some specific symbolic elements of the setting (e.g., the position of the chairs, the number of mediators, the "mirrors") are considered useful to re-elaborate, transform and welcome the chaos and conflict, without pretending to solve it completely.



Japanese bowl (1900-1940), hand painted and restored according to the Kintsugi technique. By Filippo Vanoncini

3. Instruments for Restorative Justice: focus on training

In the last few years, significant progress has been made in the field of restorative justice by international and European instruments:

- In 2002, the UN adopted the Basic Principles on the use of restorative justice programmes in criminal matters and in 2006 the first edition of the Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes was published. In May 2020, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released the second edition of the Handbook integrating more recent developments from the field.
- In 2012, the EU Victims Directive 2012/29/EU has provided a more solid position for the use of restorative justice with victims. Even if the EU Victims Directive does not argue for a right to access restorative justice, it proposes it as a service for victims which must be given with high-quality standards to protect and support them.
- In 2018, the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)8 concerning restorative justice in criminal matters reflects new developments in the field and calls for access to restorative justice to all cases and at all stages of criminal procedures and for the promotion of a restorative culture within the criminal justice system.

This section looks at how these 3 instruments may play a role in training in restorative justice.

The **UN Basic Principles** calls on Member States “to assist one another in the development and implementation of research, training or other programmes, as well as activities to stimulate discussion and the exchange of experience on restorative justice” (5). More specifically, it asks Member States to establish guidelines and standards addressing, among others, “the qualifications, training and assessment of facilitators” (III, para. 12b). The document furthermore proposes key practice principles to prepare, facilitate and follow up on a restorative justice process and suggests, when appropriate, that facilitators “receive initial training before taking up facilitation duties” (III, para. 19).

The UN Basic Principles are accompanied by concrete guidelines in the “Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes”. The 2nd edition (UNODC, 2020) is designed to be used as a reference document as well as a training tool by all professionals working in the criminal justice system. The UNODC is also developing a specific “Training Curriculum on Restorative Justice” to provide guidance for further building the capacities of those delivering restorative justice programmes. The Handbook includes one chapter on the recruitment, selection, training, assessment and supervision of facilitators (pp. 58-61), other personnel, volunteers, and community residents.

The **EU Victims' Directive** gives a victim-oriented perspective of restorative justice in different articles arguing for specific rights of victims of crime (Art. 4,1j and Art. 12, respectively on the right to be informed about restorative justice and the right to safeguards within restorative justice programmes). In terms of training, it calls for Member States to “encourage initiatives enabling those providing victim support and restorative justice services to receive adequate training to a level appropriate to their contact with victims and observe professional standards to ensure such services are provided in an impartial, respectful and professional

manner” (Art. 25, 4). This right to safe and competent services protecting and supporting victims of crimes proposes two opportunities for restorative justice services: on the one hand, they must educate restorative practitioners on victims’ rights and needs; on the other hand, they can train other criminal justice professionals working with victims of crime on restorative justice to better inform victims and refer cases, when needed. This is crucial also in terms of cooperation and coordination of services (Art. 26) to promote the exchange of good practices and complement the work done to support victims of crime.

The EU Victims Directive is accompanied by a guidance document, published one year later to facilitate the effective and timely legal transposition and practical implementation of the Directive (European Commission, 2013). A few years later, the European Forum for Restorative Justice published the “Practice Guide for Restorative Justice Services: The Victims’ Directive, challenges and opportunities for restorative justice” (2016) to explain, in practical terms, how to read the Directive and how to move on beyond the minimum standards proposed in this binding instrument. The practice guide also includes a proposal for four modules for restorative justice training, supporting (future) practitioners to learn the basics of restorative justice (theories, principles, practices) and learn about different situations through cases and role plays, and supporting senior practitioners in strengthening specific skills and even becoming future trainers (p.37-38).

The **CoE Recommendation** proposes a set of steps for training restorative justice practitioners. Training providers must be acknowledged and overseen by the national competent authorities (Rule 37) and “ensure that their materials and training approaches correspond with up-to-date evidence on effective training and facilitation practices” (Rule 45). The Recommendation calls for “procedures for the selection, training, support and assessment of facilitators, [to be] be developed” (Rule 36) and suggests that basic and advanced training is provided to practitioners before dealing with new cases. The initial training “should provide [facilitators] with a high level of competence, taking into account conflict resolution skills, the specific requirements of working with victims, offenders and vulnerable persons, and basic knowledge of the criminal justice system. Criminal justice professionals who refer cases for restorative justice should also be trained accordingly” (Rule 42). The advanced training should be specific, instead, to the peculiarities of “sensitive, complex or serious cases” (Rule 43). Also in this case, Member States should cooperate to share research and training approaches to further develop the field (Rule 64).



EU flag by Christian Lue/Unsplash

4. Teaching Restorative Justice: different approaches

Because of the nature of restorative justice and because its teaching and training courses deal with emotional issues (Gilbert, Schiff, Cunliffe, 2013) and structural societal problems (Dyck, 2006), restorative justice should be taught by using innovative teaching and training approaches. Indeed, the knowledge, skills and personal qualities strengthened in a restorative justice training do not usually fit in a traditional instructor-centered teaching strategy (Delattre and Willemsens, 2004). This chapter proposes different pedagogies (i.e., ways of teaching) relevant for training in restorative justice.

Restorative justice pedagogy

In recent years, several scholars reflected on what is now called “restorative justice pedagogy”, proposing different teaching approaches that are in line with restorative justice values and practices. Among others, Barb Toews (2013, p. 6) stated that a restorative justice pedagogy, based on restorative values, aims to:

- inspire individual and social transformation;
- build community among participants;
- give voice to the unique experiences of participants;
- offer opportunities for real-life problem solving;
- provide a creative learning environment that is co-created by students and facilitators;
- view students as practitioners, theorists, and educators;
- invite instructors to view themselves as students and share in the learning process.

Regarding restorative justice training, Gilbert, Schiff and Cunliffe (2013) criticise the term “pedagogy” as this refers mostly to formal instructional methods used by teachers to educate students, assuming that learners have little relevant experience and passively depend on the instructor to impart knowledge. Indeed, the hierarchical teaching models, where teachers have a dominant position of power compared to students, reflect the image of the criminal justice system power dynamics between professionals and clients and between people who are harmed and those responsible for the harm (Pointer et al, 2020; Toews, 2013; Freire, 1990, Hooks, 1994; Bain, 2004). This suggests that traditional training and teaching practices are not suitable when training in restorative justice practices and more innovative “transformative” pedagogical approaches are needed.

The transformative power of restorative justice pedagogy

The so-called “transformative approach” integrating theory and practice defends that education should facilitate not only the individual but also the social transformation (Toews, 2013; Dyck, 2006; Pointer et al, 2020; Hooks, 1994). This can be done with a dynamic, applied and interactive pedagogy that includes:

- Valuing a student's context, experiences, perspectives and contribution (Hooks, 1994; Pointer et al, 2020).
- Creating the space for students to feel safe to communicate and to connect with the training material in a practical way, inviting them to be critical and analyze the contents of the training programme (Hooks, 1994).
- Engaging the trainer in the process by learning from trainees, working together and sharing responsibility to create the learning experience (Freire, 1990; Pointer et al, 2020).
- Motivating trainees to reflect on systemic/structural problems and emphasize the social and historical context of crime, power analysis and awareness (Dyck, 2006).

Examples from practice on sharing power in restorative justice education

Carson and Bussler (2013) proposed to students of their restorative justice class to come up with a grading policy. The result was similar to what teachers would have proposed, but the process was helpful to balance the power differences between students and school personnel.

In another case, the full restorative justice course, including contents and evaluation methodologies, was decided by the students as a learning community without a leader or instructor (UNODC E4J, May 2020).

Teaching statements are used as a possible tool for sharing power. They are shared with students before designing the course, so that they serve to assess their expectations and co-decide about methods that will be used during the training. This approach is also useful to demonstrate to learners that the pedagogy used in the course is different and that they are capable of taking control over their education (Toews, 2013).

Nonetheless, this way of teaching can present big challenges for the teachers as well as for students. In some cases, attempting to introduce a democratic system with power sharing can put teachers in uncomfortable situations as it happened in one case, at the university level, when students reacted outraged arguing that teachers have the duty to teach and make decisions and they should not give this responsibility to students (UNODC E4J, May 2020).

Through the equal participation of both students and teachers in the learning process, a transformative approach to education is reached that allows for the application of the theory of restorative justice to practice. This innovative and practical approach to learning can become liberatory (Pointer et al, 2020) but also pose a challenge as some restorative justice trainers will have to make major personal efforts to work in this way, fearing a loss of control (Toews, 2013; Pointer et al, 2020).

Different authors proposed different pedagogies for activating the learner's experience, as listed in the table below.

| APPROACH | AUTHORS | TO KNOW MORE |
|--|--------------------------|--|
| Experiential learning approach | Pointer et al, 2020 | Students are trained by doing, with a hands-on methodology, which can be a challenge as it pushes participants out of their comfort zone. The trainer can be seen as one of the facilitators in a restorative justice process. |
| Active learning approach | Carson and Bussler, 2013 | Students are trained through problem-solving exercises, case studies and role plays. This approach promotes skills for active listening, writing and critical analysis (not only theoretical knowledge). |
| Cooperative learning approach | Kagan, 2009 | Students are trained to improve cooperation and communication. Students learn independently from one another, and each student has the same chance to express their ideas and concerns. |
| Real-world problem-solving approach | Bain, 2004 | Students are encouraged to share their experiences and stories and the classroom can use them as real-life case studies. This approach encourages trainees to work together to analyze the issue and to see if restorative justice may or may not be relevant for their lives. |
| Contemplative approach | Kitchen, 2013 | Students are engaged actively in a more reflective manner through the use of meditation and mindfulness. This can facilitate restorative justice learning by boosting empathy and interconnectedness through these transformative educational practices. |
| Restorative andragogy approach | Gilbert et al, 2013 | Students are responsible for their learning experiences depending on their maturity and educational background. This dynamic of self responsibility is precisely what restorative justice theorists and practitioners hope to achieve in the broader justice context. |

5. The Restorative Justice trainer

Teaching restorative justice invites the instructor to embark on her own journey of individual transformation that may influence both her understanding of restorative justice and how she teaches it.

(Toews, 2013, p. 20)

Self-Awareness⁵

Teaching restorative practices implies working with emotions, sometimes bringing both the trainer and the trainee out of their comfort zones (Pointer et al, 2020). Trainers must be aware about the possibility for challenging discussions and inner transformation to happen, also in terms of personal experiences and biases (Toews, 2013). Trainers must also create safe spaces to prevent students from experiencing feelings of exclusion, shame, misunderstanding or intimidation and ensure that they are learning within the window of tolerance where optimal learning occurs (Fine, 2018; Pointer et al, 2020).

Different practical tools can be helpful for this ongoing self-reflection, questioning and evaluation. Among others:

- **identity memos** may serve to consider what the trainer brings in the class and how this could affect the way the programme is designed, implemented, and evaluated (Toews, 2013);
- **teaching statements** serve to outline motivations for teaching, beliefs about the goals of education, teaching practices for achieving those goals, and strategies for creating diverse learning environments (Toews, 2013; Delattre and Willemsens, 2004);
- **meditation or mindfulness** is helpful to relax, focus attention, eliminate stress, ground and reflect (Kitchen, 2013 ; Pointer et al, 2020).

⁵ Read more about teaching statements on page 18 (The Restorative Justice Trainer - Self Awareness).

The following series of questions can be useful in the exercise of identity memos and teaching statements as a self-awareness and self-assessment tool for trainers in restorative justice (Toews, 2013; Pointer et al, 2020):

| HOW | WHAT |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are you sharing power with learners? • How are you checking your own biases and assumptions? • How are you contributing to a cooperative learning experience that creates a brave space for you and learners to engage in a conflict dialogue? • How can we better value the perspectives of the students in the room in addition to the teacher's? • How can education encourage the development of empathy? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tools do you use to stay present and non-reactive when the conversation becomes uncomfortable to you? • What learning structure will communicate and reinforce restorative values? • What are our personal and professional experiences with victimisation and offending? • What are your experiences and perspectives on privilege, power, racism, poverty, and structural injustice and how do those experiences and perspectives relate to your interest in restorative justice and inform your understanding of what restorative justice is and is not, its goals, and promises and pitfalls. |

Part of the content of this table has been published originally on Toews (2013, p.22) and on Pointer et al. (2020, p.4).

Educational and professional background of the trainers

Little is mentioned in the literature regarding the educational and professional background of professional trainers. In the research by Delattre and Willemsens (2003) on training models for mediation (note that the concept “restorative justice” was not adopted yet in this research project), trainers were:

- Experienced practitioners, meaning that they had facilitated several mediation cases and thus have an **in-depth knowledge and experience of the mediation process** and, possibly were supervised by a multidisciplinary team;
- Specialists on the topic of mediation, meaning that they were knowledgeable about the challenges and opportunities of mediation to be able to assess cases;
- Judges, state prosecutors, employees of the Ministry of Justice, policemen and university professors, whenever the legal aspects of mediation had to be taken into account within the mediation training;
- Professional trainers, meaning that they had experience and training in training itself.

In some cases, in order to work in the educational field, trainers should have received training and accreditation by a specific organisation ensuring the high quality of this practice⁶.

Soft and hard skills⁷

Even less is mentioned in the literature concerning technical (hard) and relational (soft) skills of trainers in restorative justice. Hard skills are, for example, presentation skills, computer skills, writing skills, training design, management and analytical skills. Soft skills are, among others, communication, all competencies related to communication, teamwork, leadership, interpersonal skills, creativity, and work ethics. Clearly, engaging learners into a restorative justice pedagogy requires several qualities and skills of the instructor. For Toews (2013), “the most important is the ability to solicit, listen to and respect student experiences and perspectives, especially those that seem at odds with how one understands restorative justice and its priorities and potential” (Toews, 2013, p. 18).



“The game of the object” in an empathy workshop. Photo: Filippo Vanoncini

6 Note that among the ten countries consulted by Delattre and Willemsens in 2003, only Scotland mentioned that trainers were trained and accredited by an organisation before training themselves in mediation. The other countries involved in this research were: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, England and Wales, Finland, Germany, Norway, Poland, Scotland and Spain. This may not be the case anymore in 2021.

7 This subdivision (“hard” and “soft”), however, does not offer a very applicable dichotomy: for example, the ability to write could be represented as “hard” only if it is understood as knowledge of grammar and syntax: however, writing is primarily communication, self-expression, understanding of the interlocutor, and in this sense is a “soft” skill. Also because of these difficulties, the Handbook and the Toolkit will not use the hard-soft distinction but more specific references to the different skills.

6. The Restorative Justice training

Training programme and guidelines

The **training programme and its guidelines** have to be clear, transparent and shared beforehand with all participants. This does not exclude the possibility of building them in a participatory way, together with the students. The guidelines should contain the activities and achievements that participants will reach once the course is finished (Carson and Bussler, 2013; Delattre and Willemsens, 2004). In the case of a joint brainstorming on the programme and guidelines, the students will feel actively involved in the creation of the course, responsible for their own learning experience and consider the materials as just one option and not a definitive programme (Toews, 2013).

Contents

An example regarding the content of a restorative justice training programme is the UNODC resources for lecturers where the following key topics are proposed⁸:

| 1. Concept, values and origin of restorative justice | 2. Overview of restorative justice processes |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The criminal justice system and legal justice • Meeting justice needs - Victims and offenders • What is restorative justice? • Origin and development of restorative justice • International framework relating to restorative justice • Safeguarding principles for restorative justice processes • Research relating to participants satisfaction • Impact of restorative justice on recidivism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victim offender mediation • Conferencing • Circle processes • Community panels or boards • Victim-surrogate programmes • Truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) • The use of restorative justice in criminal matters • Use at all stages of the criminal justice system • Application to serious crime • Restorative justice and gender-based violence |
| 3. How cost effective is restorative justice | 4. Issues in implementing restorative justice |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative justice and misconceptions of being “soft-on-crime” • Legislation • Awareness-raising • Relationship to indigenous communities and ‘intercultural’ aspects. |

The original publication of this table is available on the UNODC University Module Series: Module 8, Restorative Justice.

⁸ UNODC University Module Series: Module 8, Restorative Justice.

This is a very complete proposition on key issues concerning restorative justice. Still, as argued by Delattre and Willemsens (2004), in every training, not only knowledge (theory of RJ, conflict management, etc.) but also skills (hard/technical - soft/relational and personal qualities (capacity of showing vulnerability, own dealing with conflicts, etc.) should be addressed as main topics.

Engaging activities, building trust and relationships with other participants is not useful if there is not an open conversation about issues that really matter with meaningful topics.

(Pointer et al, 2020, p.1)

Training practices

The list below includes different types of practices that might help to teach restorative justice. Special attention is given to learning circles because they have been identified in the literature reviewed as the most common method for training on restorative justice:

- **Pair and group work** (Toews, 2013).
- **Movie projection** (Toews, 2013).
- **Personal story-telling** (Toews, 2013): For example asking trainees to share a real-life situation related to restorative justice.
- **Student's presentations:** For example, learning from victims interviews (Toews, 2013).
- **Role playing:** For example a simulation of a community meeting where each participant plays a different community role – provide participants with the experience of being in such a meeting and educate them on the individual and community harms and perspectives following an injustice. (Toews, 2013, p.18).
- **Field trips:** For example to an urban junior high school where issues are handled with circles or a state prison for boys where circles are used (Carson and Bussler, 2013).
- **Reflective and Analysis Papers (RAPs)** (Carson and Bussler, 2013).
- **Having guest speakers:** For example a criminal justice professional and, wherever possible, a restorative justice practitioner to talk about their experiences (Carson and Bussler, 2013).
- **Games** (Pointer et al, 2020).
- **Learning circles:** Teaching in circles is one of the examples of transformative pedagogy. It breaks all hierarchical structures, promoting equal opportunities to speak and creating knowledge by both instructors and learners. (Kitchen, 2013; Hooks, 1994; Freire, 1990). Kitchen (2013) explains that during her training, she served as the circle keeper for the first few weeks and thereafter one or two students assumed that role.

A good trainer draws from a variety of learning styles. Rather than relying on just one or two mediums for instructing, the trainer can move freely between multiple mediums and styles, knowing that participants learn things in a variety of ways.

(Umbreit, 2015, p. 5)

Tips for implementation

Taking the time to remember the trainer's audience: Checking on who your learners are (background, education, etc.), how are they feeling during the session, how are they learning (fast, slow, etc.) and responding accordingly can make an immense difference when teaching restorative justice.

As a practical example, Toews (2013) explains that during his start as a restorative justice teacher, he experienced difficulties with incarcerated community practitioners because he did not take into account that the workshop had been only designed from the lenses of the facilitator and not thinking if the content will match with the learning community. As a result, participants did not identify with the materials of the course, there was no space for the experiences and perspectives of learners and the training had poor participation.

Giving importance to the learning environment: As the role of the community is extremely relevant for restorative justice practices, the same is true for a restorative justice classroom (Gilbert et al, 2013). For a supportive and respectful environment, trainers must ensure learners feel safe but still challenge them to question themselves (safe space versus brave space) (Pointer et al, 2020). Only in this way will the community create learning spaces despite any difficult topics or challenging discussions that may arise (Pointer et al, 2020; Toews, 2013). Some of the key elements for the creation of this environment are:

- Investing time in **breaking the ice**: As a trainer, be the first to open up with a personal or professional issue in order to encourage others to do the same and demonstrate the safe space (Delattre et al, 2004 ; Toews, 2013).
- Make sure that **student's perspectives** are honoured and respected (Pointer et al, 2020).
- Make learners feel **comfortable** to make mistakes and show them that conflicts (when appearing in the classroom) can also be positive and useful to put the knowledge they are learning into practice (Delattre, Willemsens, 2004).

Having a **shared commitment** that will engage the trainer and the trainees in a respectful learning experience is important when teaching restorative justice. For this reason, some authors speak about statements (Carson and Bussler, 2013) to create rules (Delattre and Willemsens, 2004) and a fair and committed environment for the training.

I have even gone with several plans for a session, determining which is the best as the class progresses. At times, I make the wrong choice or miss an opportunity to take advantage of an interesting perspective or reaction. This is just one way in which the instructor takes risks and makes herself vulnerable, much like what is expected of the students.

(Toews, 2013, p. 19)

Creating **guidelines** for productive dialogue is a responsibility from both the trainee and the trainer but trainers should know which questions keep things on track and which questions may go off topic with shorter and less relevant answers. Engaging students to participate and follow through with their input making space and time for them is very important and so it is to know how to put limits to the inputs if needed. (Umbreit 2015).

Creativity and flexibility: Although guidelines are important for a meaningful learning experience, training, sessions should combine structure and the right amount of flexibility. For Umbreit and Lewis (2015), too little structure can also be unproductive.

Course structure: According to Umbreit and Lewis (2015), one of the most important qualities for a trainer to possess is the ability to develop a training structure that can cover all important contents in a rhythm that is not overwhelming. When trainees sense that a trainer is trying to rush explaining too many key topics within a short time, their learning capacities decrease and they feel anxious about not learning enough. Carson and Bussler propose some routine practices that can be applied at every meeting, such as sitting in a circle at the beginning or end of the class to check on everyone, or for writing a quote that would serve at the end of the training to reflect on training activities and to retain something that was important for the student (Carson and Bussler, 2013 p.142).

Closure and follow-up usually have the aim of ensuring long-term training effects. According to Kitchen (2013), the closing ceremony should take the form of a final circle to gather together one last time, to suggest changes for future courses, and to receive the gift of an engraved 'talking piece' stone to encourage future restorative work in their lives. For others (Biffi and Laxminarayan, 2014) it will be a final brainstorming session to revise future steps, give continuity to what has been learned on the training, and encourage further ideas and new professional connections.

Course evaluation and debriefing allows the instructor to know whether the proposed contents were appropriate to meet participant's needs and make modifications if necessary. The evaluation approach differs from one trainer to another. Many trainers will often make use of the same form of evaluation:proposing a self-assessment exercise as a final reflection report on the learning experience. Stommel (2018) states, however, that the mere fact of grading is a meaningless, superficial and cynical way to evaluate learning.

For Carson and Bussler, the grading policy was used as an active-learning strategy engaging learners to co-develop the policy and aiming to balance the power differences between students and instructors, leading to a democratic way of teaching restorative justice.

On the more traditional and practical side, the UNODC sources for lecturers propose two examples of students' assignments; one is to reflect upon a scenario and apply knowledge of restorative justice and the other is to watch a video about a restorative justice conference and write a critical reflection about what they learned⁹. Finally, Delattre and Willemsens (2004), gather different European techniques for evaluating mediation training. Some examples are: written work or exams, practice oriented exams, interviews after the training, self-assessment forms, or no evaluation at all.

Trainer's self-evaluation. The questions below are useful for a self-assessment of trainers (Toews, 2013):

| To what degree did your teaching practices promote or hinder... | How did the class influence you in terms of: |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student expression of personal experiences and perspectives? • Connect to the real-world experiences of the students? • Communicate respect for students? • Engage students in collaborative problem-solving? • Uncover new understandings of restorative justice and its practices? • Create opportunities for the students to be the teachers? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging your assumptions about crime and justice? • Raising awareness about your experiences with power, privilege, racism, and other forms of structural and institutional violence? • Expanding or modifying your understanding of restorative justice and its promise and problems? |

The original publication of this table is available on Toews, B. (2013) Towards a restorative justice pedagogy: reflections on teaching restorative justice in correctional facilities, Contemporary Justice Review, 16:1, 6-27, DOI: 10.1080/10282580.2013.769308



Talking Piece by Frank Spencer of Redweather Productions

⁹ See materials for the two examples in the website <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/crime-prevention-criminal-justice/module-8/student-assessment.html>

7. Consultation process

The consultation process highlighted the characteristics of a **trainer** in restorative justice (in terms of educational and professional background, relational and technical skills, network, as well as his/her sources of inspiration) and the characteristics of a **training programme for trainers** (in terms of contents, methods and implementation).

7.1. Methodology

In Spring 2021, the European Forum for Restorative Justice (EFRJ) coordinated a consultation process with trainers, practitioners and scholars in the field of restorative justice. Three different research methods were designed: a focus group discussion (6.1.1.), an online survey (6.1.2.) and a series of interviews (6.1.3.).

The main research questions were: What are the strengths in knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors of trainers, and what are the good practices in restorative justice training? Responses have been clustered below according to trainers' competences and background (see 6.2) and details about training programmes for becoming trainers in restorative justice practices (see 6.3). The ideas listed are not necessarily exhaustive or conclusive, as they refer to the responses of the consultation process (namely 44 respondents divided in the three research methodologies) but they provide some general guidelines, in line also with the findings of the literature review. The data collected does not identify differences around attitudes and opinions that differ according to gender, age categories, and country differences.

7.1.1. Focus Group Discussion

The EFRJ Training Committee participated in a virtual focus group discussion, facilitated by two EFRJ researchers, to talk in depth about certain topics and issues. Questions were primarily related to knowledge in terms of training contents and methods and in terms of trainers' skills and competences.

The EFRJ Training Committee is composed of 8 expert practitioners and trainers representing different countries in Europe (Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, UK). Its purpose is to bring together practitioners (and other experts) to identify, promote, and support high-quality restorative justice training practice.

The focus group discussion was organised around 9 key questions which were debated over a 4-hour meeting, spread over two different sessions. The virtual meeting gathered 6 members of the Training Committee, its coordinator (i.e., the EFRJ training officer) and 3 project officers of MEDIAREJ (i.e., the two EFRJ researchers and the project coordinator).

The focus group discussion was originally organised for 2 hours, but the group had lively and dynamic conversations around each question. For this reason, a second meeting was organised. Both were video recorded and detailed notes were taken.

7.1.2 Online survey

An anonymous online survey was disseminated to the members in the EFRJ Register of Qualified Restorative Justice Trainers. This register is composed of 63 EFRJ trainers, coming

from 17 different countries in Europe and beyond. Given the low response rate, the online survey also targeted other trainers contacted directly by the MEDIAREJ project partners. Twenty-six respondents from 9 different countries filled in the online survey. This method served to understand about strengths and gaps in terms of restorative justice training. The responses received sometimes seemed to be applicable not only for trainers, but for practitioners as well.

The online survey asked simple yes or no/multiple choice questions related to training contents and methods and to practitioners' skills and competencies. Likert scale items allowed to better understand opinions, behaviors and attitudes related to restorative justice training. This methodological tool was pre-tested with the EFRJ Training Committee before its launch.

7.1.3. Interviews

Several well-known trainers, teachers, practitioners and/or scholars were approached to contribute to the project findings by sharing their professional and personal experiences in the field of restorative justice and in humanistic approaches to mediation and restorative justice. They were contacted for personal interviews to share, as conversations, information about their experience and thoughts in terms of restorative justice training. All project partners conducted one or more interviews, adapting the questions according to the specific professional interviewed. The full interviews will be published on the MEDIAREJ website, while this handbook includes only some citations relevant for the different topics.

A total of 12 individuals were interviewed, namely (in alphabetical order):

1. Ivo Aertsen (Belgium) - professor, pioneer of the restorative justice movement in Europe;
2. Tim Chapman (Northern Ireland) - trainer, practitioner, academic, current EFRJ chair;
3. Maria Georgescu (Romania) - professor and mediator;
4. Siri Kemeny (Norway) - service director and practitioner;
5. Leonardo Lenzi (Italy) - coordinator of mediators' training programmes;
6. Anja Mirosavljević (Croatia) - assistant professor;
7. David Moore (Australia) - academic, facilitator and trainer;
8. Jacqueline Morineau (France) - pioneer of the humanistic mediation approach;
9. Patrizia Patrizi (Italy) - professor and trainer in psychology, law and restorative justice;
10. Julián Rios Martín (Spain) - professor, author of several books on restorative justice;
11. Martina Tomić Latinac (Croatia) - responsible for capacity building of mediators;
12. Howard Zehr (USA) - academic restorative justice pioneer.

7.2. The Trainer

This chapter highlights the findings of the consultation process regarding the characteristics of a trainer in restorative justice (i.e., background experiences, skills, competencies, attitudes), useful to efficiently carry out a restorative justice training course. This chapter is divided according to the main findings for educational and professional background (6.2.1.), relational and technical skills (6.2.2.), network (6.2.3) and sources of inspiration (6.2.4).

7.2.1 Educational and Professional Background

This section reflects the participants' views concerning what type of educational background (if any) should a restorative justice trainer have in terms of official titles/studies and whether a background as a practitioner is necessary or not. In a more personal sense, participants were also asked to share how they started to engage in RJ training, what was the triggering factor and how these first experiences shaped their teaching methods.

Should the trainer have a background as a RJ practitioner?

Almost all participants agree that it is important to have a background as a RJ practitioner (if possible also with serious and complex cases and contexts) in order to fully understand and transmit with authenticity knowledge of and experiences in RJ practices. Having practice background is useful for the trainer:

- To have confidence, credibility and communicate more efficiently the learning objectives to the trainees;
- To collect a “stock” of stories and case studies to illustrate theories in practice;
- To be able to elaborate role plays or other interactive exercises;
- To acknowledge the range of challenges that RJ practices may have in real cases.

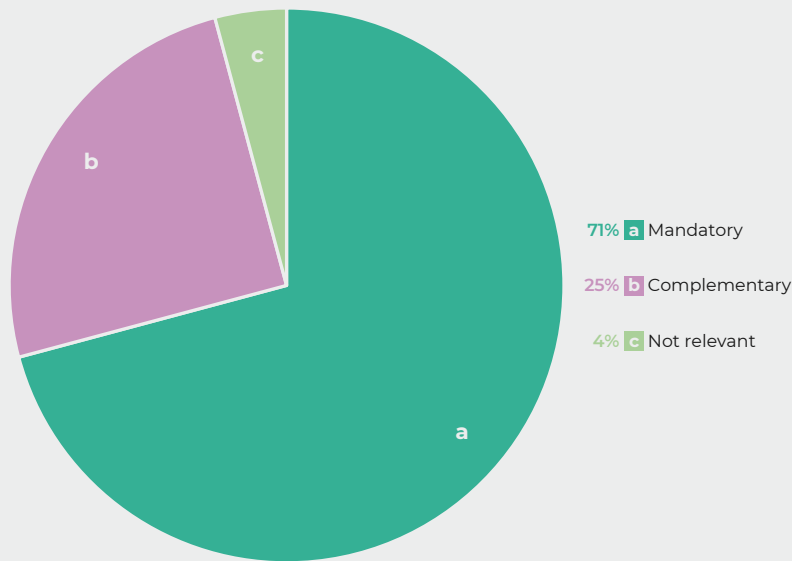
Nonetheless, some participants clarified that not necessarily all senior RJ practitioners can be good trainers. Teaching and training require specific skills such as the ability to explain relevant theories and transmit practice experience, which enables people to learn. A practical recommendation from the field is to work in pairs, so that two trainers can better complement each other's knowledge and skills (e.g., theory and practice; psychosocial skills and legal framework; casework and management).¹⁰ This also reflects the need for trainers to be part of interdisciplinary groups and networks (see 7.2.3.).



People participating in a training by Fortytwo/Unsplash

¹⁰ To read more about the practice of co-training, especially in the model of humanistic mediation training, find the interview with the trainer Leonardo Lenzi (Italy) on the website of MEDIAREJ available from October 2021.

Should the trainer have a background as a practitioner?



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

How many hours of RJ practice should a trainer have?

Most participants think that it is difficult to quantify the hours of RJ practices that trainers should have collected in their professional lives. Some say that facilitating 5 cases is enough, while others argue that 5 years of practice are needed, while others believe that practitioners with a short time experience could also deliver a good training if they are accompanied by a senior trainer. A practical recommendation is to “learn by doing”, meaning that a junior practitioner is coached for training by a more experienced colleague or by a team.

Should the trainer have followed a specific training on RJ training first?

The debate about the trainers' relevant experiences necessary for them to be “good trainers” remains open. As shown in the graph below, respondents' personal journeys are quite disparate and there is not yet a general rule: a slight majority responded that they became trainers by doing it or by using the skills of RJ practitioners, while the others attended some training in restorative justice training or other relevant fields.

Those who have never trained must learn and experience the methodologies of adult education. One must learn to manage the classroom, facilitate a suitable environment that enables people to get involved, to express themselves, to reflect and confront each other in a non-judgmental environment. Those who act in the field of restorative justice should already be able to do so, but in training there are other important aspects the trainers must be able to recognize and deal with.

Patrizia Patrizi, Italy

Most of them recommend participating in a dedicated training for trainers. A practical idea comes from some organisations proposing to future RJ trainers to attend as participants the same training they will be delivering. In a specific case, after three days of training, participants (i.e., future trainers) were asked to expose how they would implement their

training in terms of contents and methods and then they are invited to lead some sessions to practice and receive immediate feedback.

The trainer's preparation can also take place in a more conventional course to learn didactic skills (e.g., train the trainer course, courses on psychology of learning, teaching)¹¹.

The difficult and long-standing question of the formalization of the informal is the most complicated thing there and, on the other hand, it may in some cases be necessary.

Leonardo Lenzi, Italy

Some respondents questioned the advantages and disadvantages of official titles, registers or other homologations to become a trainer (or practitioner) in restorative justice. While official studies may ensure high quality standards of trainings and offer participants a recognized certificate for their efforts, these may prevent some to become trainers even when they have the skills, attitudes and knowledge to teach about restorative justice, missing the opportunity for diversity and cross-fertilization in the field.

“Under the heading “skills” the requirement was: “none”, that is, anyone could be presented at the training. There was a crowd, very different people, there was the one who built coffins, an electrician, then there was a PhD in bioethics, there was all this variety and this variety was a great wealth of the mediation offices (...) Despite all the pressures that there are for a professionalization of the mediator, keeping this characteristic of “a thousand flowers” will be very difficult”

Leonardo Lenzi, Italy



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

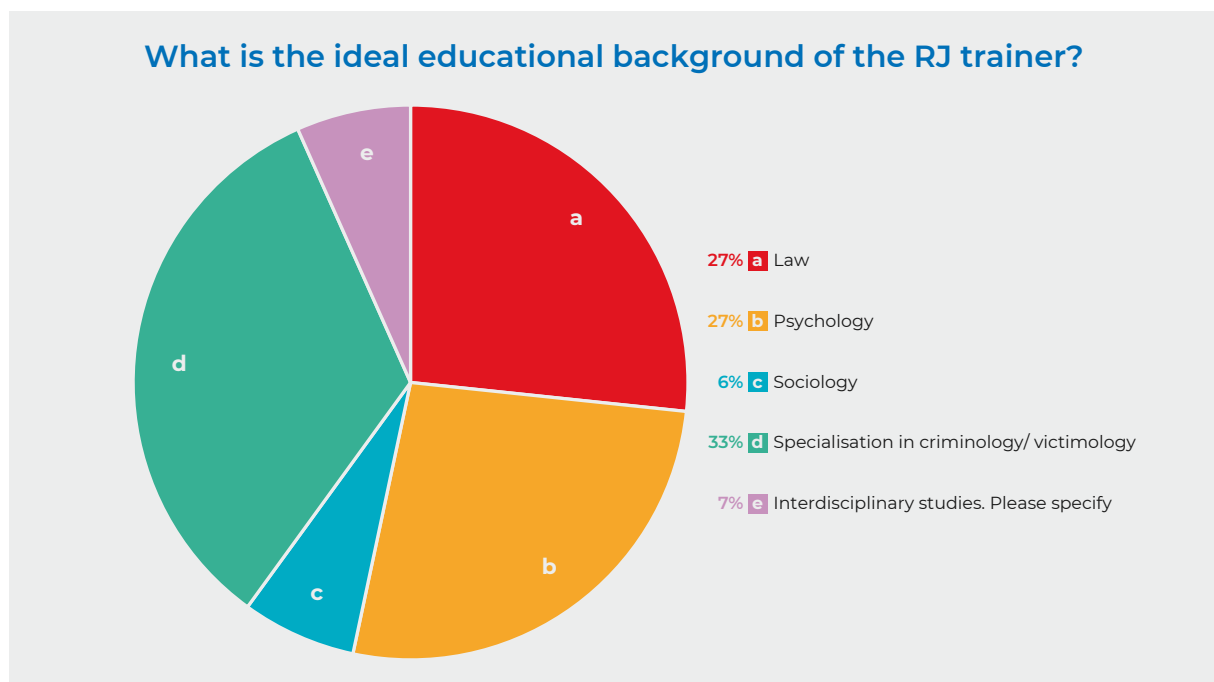
¹¹ Such types of training are not widely offered yet for RJ trainers. At the European level, the EFRJ is working to provide peer learning and capacity building activities for trainers in 2022-2025.

What type of educational background should a restorative justice practitioner and/or trainer have? Why?

Regarding the educational background, most participants doubt that there is a “best academic background” for a trainer in restorative justice. Indeed, as restorative justice is a highly interdisciplinary field, limiting professionals in this field to come from one academic field would restrict the scope of restorative justice itself. Nonetheless, a third of participants of the online survey have answered that a background in criminology can be very useful.

The (perfect) trainer should have a high level of experience in restorative justice not only in practice, but also in research and theoretical reflection; have interpersonal skills, self-reflective ability, self-knowledge, attitudes consistent with the values of restorative justice, ability to manage group dynamics and ability to involve, active listening and empathy. During the training it is necessary to be able to give constructive feedback and to encourage a circularity of feedback among the participants in the classroom. Starting from these premises, I think that any specialization can be appropriate (Psychology, Law, Pedagogy, Social Sciences, Social Service, Anthropology, Criminology, Victimology).

Patrizia Patrizi, Italy



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

A specialisation in **criminology** is useful to understand the needs of victims and perpetrators. This serves RJ practitioners and trainers to facilitate and explain how RJ processes may help meet those needs. Also, criminology (as well as victimology) offers an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach.

A background in **psychology** offers knowledge on the perception, behaviour and impact of different events on individuals and communities, as well as enhancing the development of communication principles and skills.

Finally, **law** also may provide an important educational background for trainers in restorative justice as it can help to understand the specific juridical position of the victim and the offender.

In conclusion, there is not a professional and academic mandatory background to become a trainer in restorative justice but it is highly recommended to:

- have a solid understanding based on theory and research;
- practical experience;
- restorative attitude and behaviour;
- general training skills.

7.2.2. Relational and Technical skills

This section refers to the relational and technical skills of trainers (also called “soft” and “hard” skills”). Respondents listed the most important skills and explained why these are useful for training in restorative justice. Clearly this may not be an exhaustive list of the capacities needed by trainers to efficiently carry out training courses in restorative justice, as these reflect the limited responses received by the 44 participants of the consultation process.

In general, the following conclusions are to be kept in mind when talking about the skills of trainers in RJ training:

- Trainers of RJ training often see themselves as facilitators of a restorative learning experience, thus they use most of the relational skills required for an RJ practitioner or mediator.
- Relational skills are difficult to be taught in a conventional way as they need to be practiced and experienced; the use of an experiential and practice learning approach when training on restorative justice is highly recommended.
- The technical skills can be easily delegated or shared among a team to work more efficiently and are in general considered easier to learn when compared to relational skills.
- Relational and technical skills are highly interconnected as one supports the development of the other (e.g., time management serves the interpersonal and communication skills ensuring that everyone in the room has a voice and time to express oneself).

Different types of skills are needed in the different areas of work in which trainers work:

- During the preparation phase, the trainer is in touch with the course commissioner, develops a proposal and a contract, communicates with participants, prepares practical information and other preparatory materials;

- During the delivery phase, technological skills are helpful as well to foster creativity and flexibility to adapt to unexpected circumstances and trainees' needs;
- During the follow up phase, the trainer may invest time in supporting trainees in practicing the new skills they learnt, in some cases also by establishing a support group with all trainees to share responsibilities over the assistance and encouragement needed.

A challenging experience, developing communication and negotiation skills, flexibility and confidence in the mediation process. I can't say that I am a well-known practitioner in the field, but it certainly helped me a lot in my teaching career and in my relationship with students, colleagues and even my family.

Maria Georgescu, Romania

What are the relational skills needed by trainers? Why are these useful?

The list below was collected during the focus group discussion:

- **Congruence/ authenticity:** In order to be accepted, credible and gain a good reputation, a trainer's behavior and attitudes (with trainees and others) are expected to be in line with restorative values.
- **Constant Curiosity:** A trainer may not have all answers to trainee's doubts and concerns; he/she may welcome critical questions as a positive thing and an opportunity for learning together.
- **Empathy and Compassion:** A trainer should have a sense of synchronicity with his/her audience, especially concerning feelings and sufferings, to prevent pushing trainees in an uncomfortable zone (where learning may be more difficult).
- **Humility:** Trainers must be prepared to work in a horizontal way, sharing power with and learning from the trainees' knowledge, skills and attitude.
- **Skills for Encouragement and Constructive Feedback:** A trainer is skilled in encouraging, inspiring and motivating trainees to share thoughts, take risks, make mistakes and go out of their comfort zone, recognizing their efforts instead of the outcomes, building trust and encouraging team building.
- **Skills for adopting a Narrative Approach:** A trainer may teach using his/her facilitation skills to collect personal stories from trainees and to offer interpretations relevant for the training's contents, as people's accounts create connectivity and a sense of belonging in the group.
- **Flexibility:** In line with restorative justice values and practice principles, a trainer may be open, patient and tolerant for eventual changes, accommodating in this way trainees'

needs and co-creating their best learning environment¹².

- **Attention to Detail:** A trainer is attentive to people's training needs and gives concrete and specific indications to each participant, demonstrating sensitivity and generosity. This is also important to connect with trainees whose first language is different from the trainer's language, to ensure that terminologies and concepts are understood.
- **Interdisciplinary Cooperation:** Trainers are aware of the specificities and limitations of restorative justice and cooperate with other experts (e.g., therapists, social workers, lawyers, psychologists) to explain theories and practices relevant for other fields of competence.

The online survey proposed some main relational skills; respondents could choose a value between the most important to the least important skill. Still, none of the skills below was rated much higher than others:

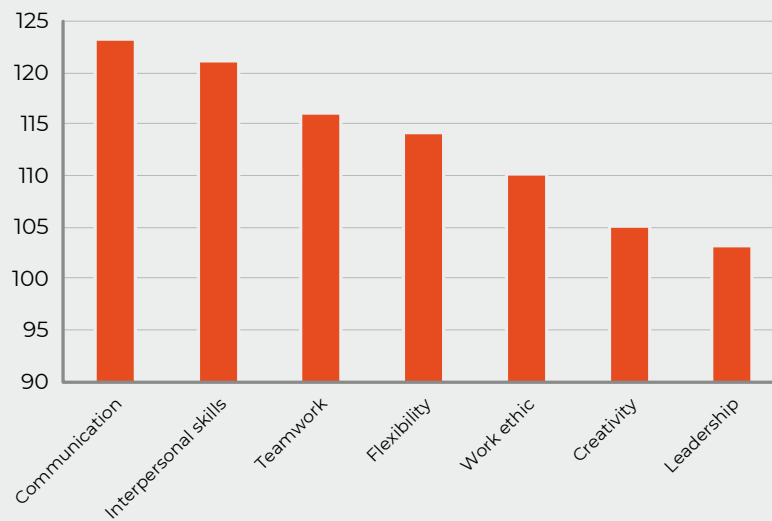
- **Communication:** such as verbal/ nonverbal communication, public speaking, listening, clarity, friendliness, cultural intelligence.
- **Teamwork:** such as cooperation, mediation, active listening, negotiation, networking.
- **Leadership:** such as mentoring, prioritising, planning, stress management, delegation.
- **Interpersonal skills:** such as empathy, patience, sensitivity, humility, generosity, attention to detail.
- **Flexibility:** such as open-mindedness, adaptability, analysis, decision making, organisation, problem solving.
- **Creativity:** such as innovation, experimentation, design, questioning, initiative.
- **Work ethic:** such as integrity, responsibility, discipline, time-management, self-motivation.

It is a journey of self-knowledge, which certainly never ends.

Jacqueline Morineau, France

¹² More information about advantages and disadvantages of flexibility in training in the literature review page 22.

What are the most useful relational skills for the RJ trainer?



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

What are the technical skills needed by trainers? Why are these useful?

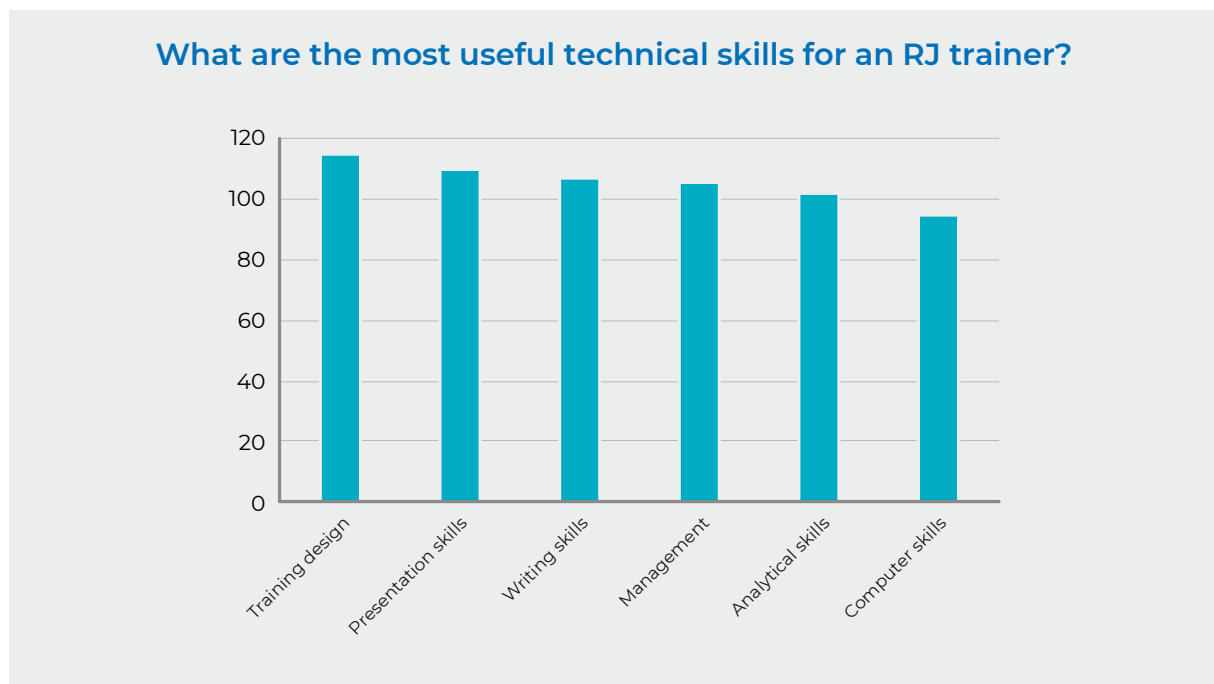
The list below was collected during the focus group discussion:

- **Didactical skills:** Trainers should have the capacity to design a training programme as well as give concrete and clear instructions about it.
- **Leadership:** Trainers should know the techniques to activate groups and to improve relationships.
- **Capacity to deliver experiential learning:** The trainer proposes interactive exercises and puts him/herself in a position of shared power.
- **Presentation and writing skills:** The trainer can create an engaging course with high-quality content, which can be adapted to different audiences/ settings if needed and includes presentations that create narratives.
- **Management:** The trainers must know how to plan, prepare and deliver a good course; also, time management ensures that the training is implemented in a respectful and professional way.
- **Storytelling skills:** The trainer may use personal cases and stories to encourage the active listening of trainees and match theories with practice.

In the online survey, respondents could rate as more or less important the technical skills listed below, although they were all rated in a similar way:

- **Presentation skills:** such as visual tools, slideshows, interactive exercises, layout.

- **Computer skills:** such as emails, PowerPoint, Word, webforms.
- **Writing skills:** such as note taking, emails, storytelling, case studies.
- **Training design:** such as content planning, time scheduling, logistics.
- **Management:** such as organisation, negotiation, budgeting, evaluation.
- **Analytical skills:** such as research, data analysis and presentation, theorising, reporting.



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

7.2.3. The Trainer's Network

This section includes the respondents' reflections about relevant partnerships, cooperation and networks useful for trainers (as well as for practitioners) working in restorative justice. All respondents agree that networking is very useful and needed, especially for sharing experiences and gaining inspiration from other trainers and improving the quality of training.

What type of partnerships/cooperation and networks are useful for trainers in restorative justice?

Different layers of local partnerships (from the personal to the institutional level) were mentioned by the trainers involved in the consultation process. The list below is ranked in order of importance, according to the responses received.

- **Connection with colleagues:** Trainers benefit from the assistance of their direct colleagues, when a positive working climate and a culture of support is established to freely discuss the challenges of their work.

- **Partnerships with academia:** Training programmes may benefit from the support of a university team, in terms of contents and training methods. This cooperation will also benefit practitioners that feel a big gap between existing literature and everyday practice issues¹³. The ideal strategy is to have a university team as a permanent partner in the (local or national) network of programmes, so that practices, policies, training and research can be decided upon and carried out in mutual cooperation. Specifically, an academic environment could contribute to the training with:
 - Understanding the theoretical knowledge about RJ history; the place of restorative justice within a range of normative theories; the relationship between restorative justice and criminal justice/law; the implementation of restorative justice theories and strategies; the societal/political function and pitfalls of restorative justice.
 - Knowledge related to empirical research findings on restorative justice (impact on offenders, victims and community, cost-effectiveness, selection and referral processes, ethical codes).
 - Constructing tools for monitoring and (self-)evaluation, which are tasks that might be part of a training programme, and on developing a tool to evaluate (the effectiveness of) a training programme.
 - Providing didactic or pedagogical expertise to design and implement an RJ training programme, for example by intervening with practical skills training.

Evaluation and research is not only a task for research institutes and universities, but is expected now more and more from practitioners as well - at least to contribute to research and to co-create knowledge ... This ground attitude must be part of a training programme as it finally will support the growth of the 'reflective practitioner'.

Ivo Aertsen, Belgium

- **Local networks:** Organisations and institutions (such as NGOs, schools, prisons, municipalities) could support trainers because of their field of work and contact with specific target groups, by disseminating the training, or by providing venues to host it.
- **National networks:** At the national level, trainers can find opportunities for having access to different resources, such as funding, invitation to events, or new commissions for training (e.g. within the criminal justice system).
- **International networks:** Trainers may be inspired and receive new work opportunities by actively participating in the activities of international networks working in the field of restorative justice (e.g., EFRJ)¹⁴ and related fields. In practice, this includes playing a role in working groups, attending conferences and seminars, and cooperating in European projects.

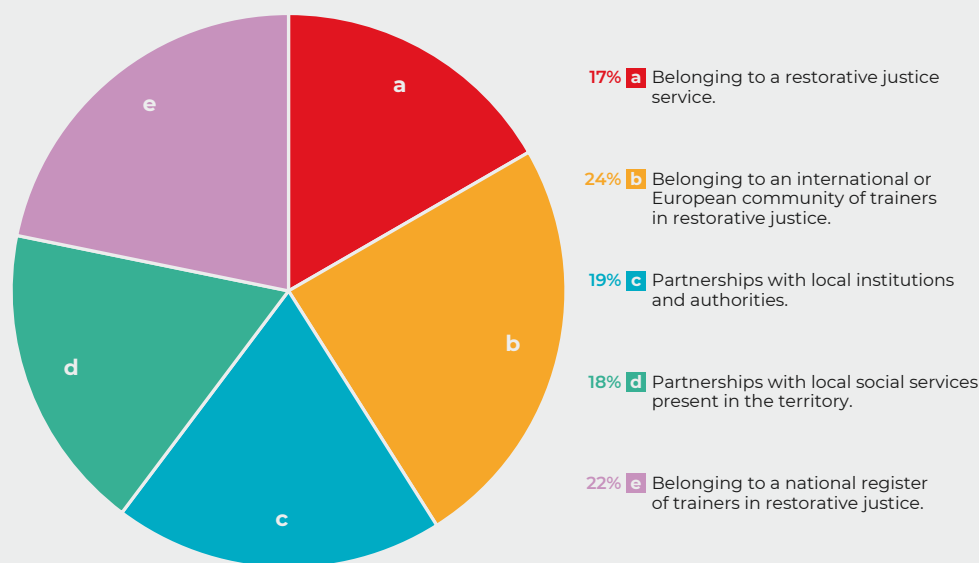
¹³ Ivo Aertsen (Belgium), David Moore (Australia) and Howard Zehr (USA) further elaborated on this point of establishing good cooperation between practice and academia. All interviews will be available on the MEDIAREJ website in Autumn 2021.

¹⁴ The EFRJ and other international networks were mentioned as the main source of inspiration (see 7.2.4.).

There is value in such a link. In my view, primary foci should be on keeping practitioners up-to-date on the applied implications of research, researching best practices, helping practitioners to keep grounded in the principles, values and conceptual framework of RJ, and encouraging practitioners to balance their enthusiasm for the field and work with a critical perspective. The downside of such a link is that academics can bring an approach that is too academic and abstract. It is important to find a way to maintain a balance between academics and practice.

Howard Zehr, USA

What are the most useful networks for the RJ trainer?



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

I think that a facilitator in restorative processes needs to drink from different sources, places and environments. The experience is not in a single place but in life itself.

Julián Ríos, Spain

7.2.4. Sources of inspiration

This section reflects the many and diverse sources of inspiration for trainers and practitioners in the RJ field. The list below indicates, as has already been seen in other sections of this Handbook, the fact that the RJ field is rather interdisciplinary.

It is "hygienic" existentially, intellectually and professionally, every now and then, to change one's operating environment and one's object of interest and, if possible (but alas this is much less possible), to change one's place of life ; if you can't, at least change what you can: it is important to overwrite this internal hard drive and load more data.

Leonardo Lenzi, Italy

A large number of respondents mentioned that they receive inspiration for their RJ training beyond RJ publications or RJ events. For example, they develop new creative ideas by:

- being curious about **other subjects** or professional areas that can be close to restorative justice (e.g., work on personal introspection, psychology, victimology, social movements, community).
- **ongoing training**.
- reading, watching and listening to **cultural resources** not specific to restorative justice itself (e.g., movies, novels, music, podcasts).
- their **personal journey** and all experiences that they have lived (e.g., childhood, former jobs, inspirational personalities).

It's very relevant that trainers continue working on themselves as a personal training. A trainer has to know him or herself very well.

Patrizia Patrizi, Italy

All participants agree that a great source of inspiration comes from **their colleagues** (including co-trainers and co-facilitators) and even students and **the trainees of their courses** as they defend the idea that during the restorative learning process the trainer should not be at the center and must be humble and willing to learn from other's knowledge and experience¹⁵.

In the formation of trainers it is as if each were a piece of a mosaic, each piece is unique and useful for composing a whole.

Leonardo Lenzi, Italy

Some of the most mentioned sources, such as training, publications and organisations, collected during the consultation process are listed in the Resource Kit (see page 52). Some unique personal experiences mentioned were linked to their **attendance to international events** or other activities organised by network organisations (e.g., EFRJ; Center for Nonviolent Communication; Transformative Justice Australia; UK Restorative Justice Council). Others referred to their **cooperation with universities** and specific scholars. Regarding **authors, trainers and practitioners** in the RJ field, more than one respondent mentioned¹⁶ that he/she got inspiration from:

¹⁵ More information about how the trainer should see himself as a student and share learning can be found in the literature review in page 18.

¹⁶ The list of personalities is ordered according to the number of respondents who mentioned his/her name as a source of inspiration. When more names are listed in the same row, it is because they were mentioned by an equal number of respondents (then the alphabetical order by surname is chosen).

- Tim Chapman (Northern Ireland);
- Howard Zehr (USA);
- John Braithwaite (Australia); Jaqueline Morineau (France); Martin Wright (UK);
- Adolfo Ceretti (Italy); Belinda Hopkins (UK); Marian Liebmann (UK); Daniel Van Ness (USA); Ted Wachtel (USA);
- Dominic Barter (Brazil); Nils Christie (Norway); Ivo Lizzola (Italy); Maria Rosa Mondini (Italy); Claudia Mazzucato (Italy), Patrizia Patrizi (Italy); Kay Pranis (Canada); Marg Thorsborne (Australia).

7.3. The Training Programme

This chapter highlights the findings of the consultation process regarding the contents (6.3.1), methods (6.3.2), implementation (6.3.3) and assessment (6.3.4) of the training for RJ trainers. Around these three key areas, respondents were asked to reflect on the minimum criteria and best practices that could ensure that the training courses achieve their pedagogical objectives.

7.3.1. Contents

This section lists the contents considered useful in a training for RJ trainers. Sometimes respondents may also have proposed contents which are needed for training RJ practitioners. As a general rule, contents may be planned in a modest way to avoid losing attention from participants and to make sure that the important topics are well understood and integrated into the learning process¹⁷.

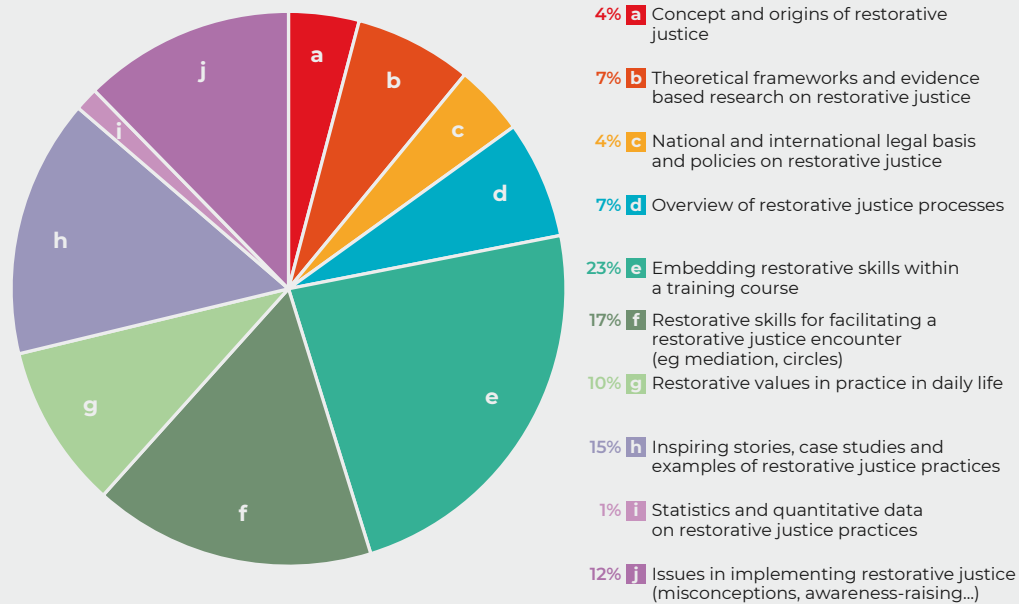
It goes without saying that the training programme will differ from group to group. But the training will always focus on attitudes, knowledge and skills.

Ivo Aertsen, Belgium

In the online survey, respondents could select among the top ten topics for transferring RJ knowledge and skills to trainers.

¹⁷ During the Focus Group Discussion, a participant mentioned that David Kolb, psychologist, exposed a model saying that people only retain 15% of what they hear and 20% of what they observe.

What are the most useful contents to include in a RJ training?



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

Below, a list of additional contents proposed during the consultation process as key for training in restorative justice is presented:

- Interpersonal skills needed to teach the emotional dimension of the conflict and to develop self awareness that will help to avoid prejudices when practicing or training restorative justice.
- Communication skills for encouraging dialogue during a RJ encounter are useful practice skills also for training delivery.
- Management and implementation skills for those who will have a coordinator or leading position in the RJ training programme.
- Reflections about attitudes to crime and punishment, especially when the training concerns the use of restorative justice or mediation in criminal justice cases.
- Reflections about safety (of the parties and of the facilitators/ mediators), especially what to do in different kinds of emergencies, particularly for training dedicated to the use of restorative justice in complex cases.
- Some contents on criminology and victimology may serve for a more in-depth approach to restorative justice.

Research is not something that should be reserved to universities or research institutes, but it should be part of each restorative justice professional or organisation, at least in some way and to some extent. This is a huge responsibility for restorative justice (umbrella) organisations, and also for restorative justice trainers. If we do not include research findings, research methodologies and theoretical insights into our training programmes, we run the risk of becoming ‘rolling stones’, not aware where we are going to, not aware of our place within broader institutional and societal contexts.

Ivo Aertsen, Belgium

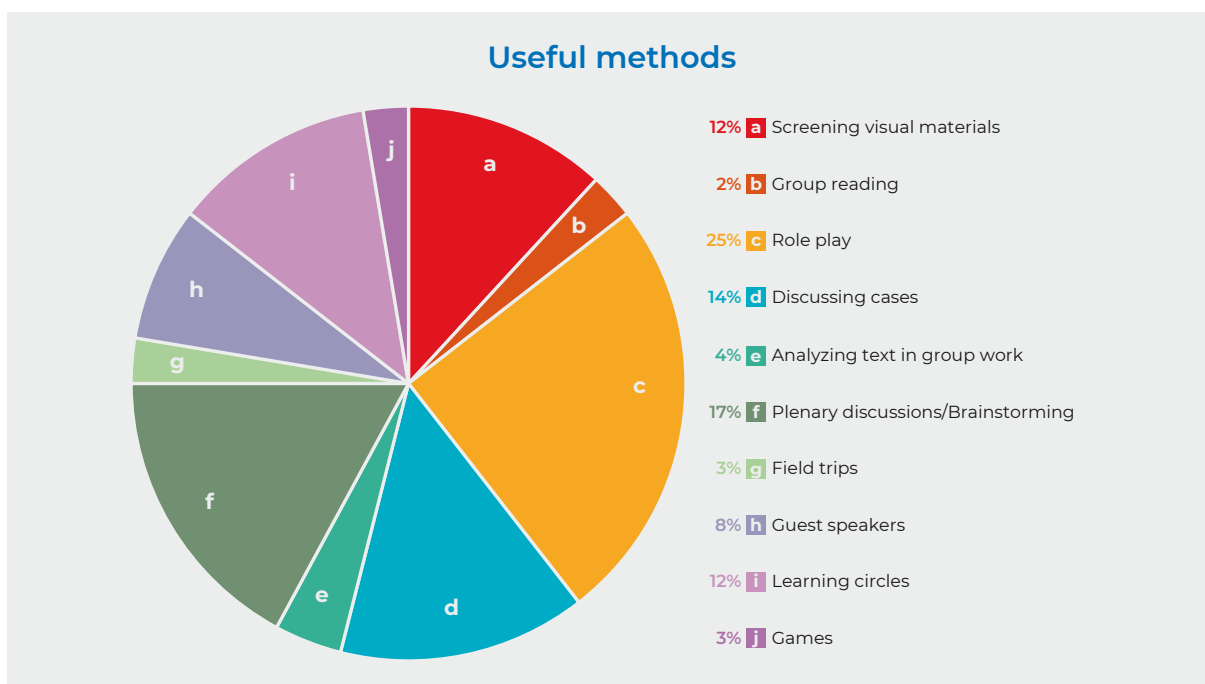
7.3.2. Methods

RJ skills cannot be easily learned by just following instructions from the trainer and therefore the methods should also offer a framework to trainees on where they can further develop and apply these skills.

The training methods must be able to stimulate reflection, increase knowledge and implement this knowledge with a restorative attitude. Therefore, the trainer’s work should be aimed at enhancing participants’ resources, with regard to both restorative justice and training methods.

In training, I use a lot of videos promoted by EFRJ that allow you to activate the emotional part, to immediately promote contact with the values and principles of restorative justice, to overcome some prejudicial visions

Patrizia Patrizi, Italy



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

7.3.3. Implementation

What would the ideal implementation phase look like? Is there an optimal format, number of hours, environment, number of trainers, etc.?

In terms of implementation (e.g., format, number of hours, environment, number of trainers), respondents had different views.

The **length** of the training will depend on the **format** (face-to-face, online or blended) although there is no specific number of hours required for this type of training (though 16h-24h seems to be a popular format). Online training sessions should be shorter than the originally planned face-to-face sessions because this virtual configuration has been proven to be more draining than others.

Since we live in a digitalised world we lose something very important in human communication, not seeing the others face in real life. The other's face is an important corrective.

Siri Kemeny, Norway

In general, restorative justice trainers prefer the **face-to-face** format as the connection with participants and the sense of community in a restorative learning environment is crucial and it cannot be easily achieved with an online setting. A good **blended** version could be to dedicate the parts that can be learned at home for the online learning and then to dedicate the plenaries and face-to-face sessions for a more experiential learning. Some days before beginning the training session (at least one week before), the trainer should send participants a reading list, a booklet, or other forms of materials to prepare for the learning session. An example could be to plan a few hours of theory delivered online including legal basis and policy.

Also before beginning the training sessions, it is important for the trainer to look at the background of the trainees, their specific needs and their skills and previous experience. This will help the trainer adjust the contents of the programme to the specific audience.

I like to adopt a relaxed informal approach which allows people to participate actively in their learning. I mix music, video, physical activities which have learning objectives, short inputs on concepts and skills, stories from my practice, quotations from writers, poets and singers, small groups to practice skills or to reflect on concepts and values, etc.

Tim Chapman, Northern Ireland

In order to nicely enter into the safe environment and promote self-involvement, it is recommended to start the session with a circle to learn more about the participant's thoughts, emotions and expectations. . This can also be used as a routine for the closure of the session. During the first circle, participants may be asked to talk about their expectations on the training and during the closing circle they can be asked to share thoughts about the programme they attended.

Training should be interactive, participatory and open to many critical questions. The use of exercises and breakout sessions is needed to ensure interactivity, while the use of case studies and role plays encourages relational and emotional interactions through experimentation. This self-engagement will allow people to express themselves, to face their opinions, to process their feelings in the group and through the group.

During and after the training, it is advisable to continue to guarantee spaces for supervision and revision of the tools acquired, also by encouraging the establishment of working groups and giving homework to participants after each session.

In terms of technological tools useful for the training delivery, some differences exist between the online and face-to-face formats. In most cases, these tools serve both formats:

- Videos, films and documentaries;
- Music;
- Books and fairy tales;
- Cases presented by the trainer and cases brought by the trainees;
- Handouts;
- Good interactive presentation (e.g. PowerPoint, Prezi).

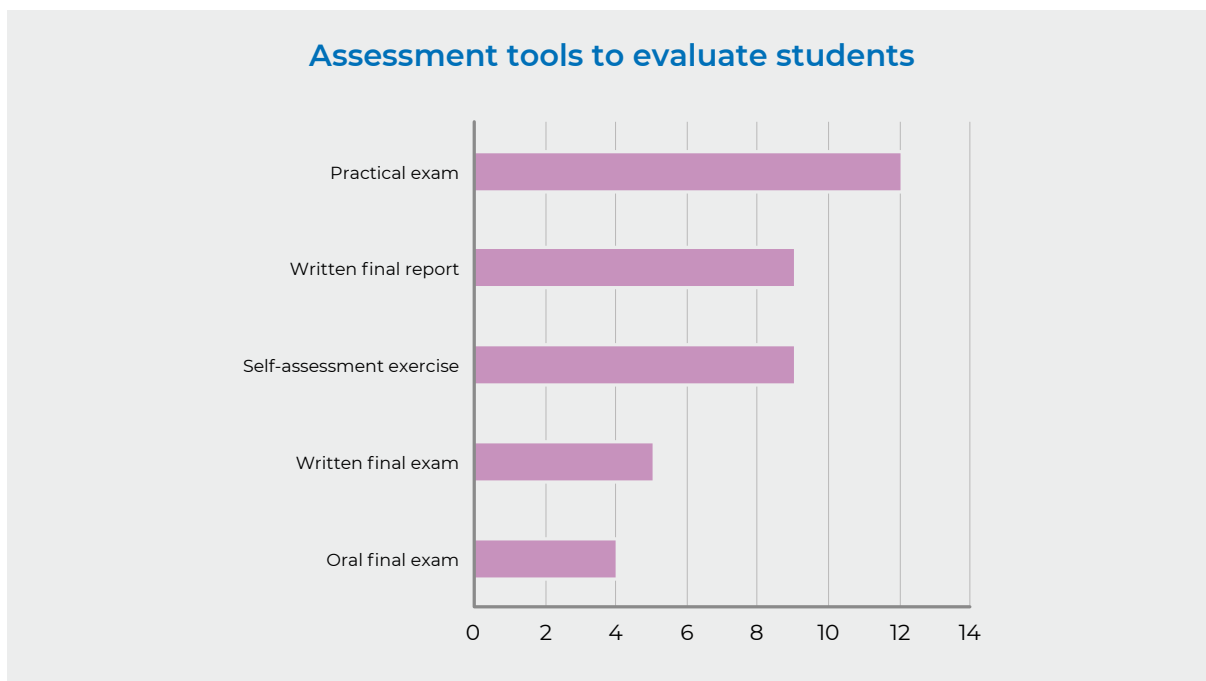
At the end of the training period an assessment of the knowledge and competences is also recommended, especially if the training offers the option of accreditation.

7.3.4. Assessment tools

Participants in the online survey were asked to mention different assessment tools they use during their training in terms of the students acquired knowledge and the trainer's own performance.

How to evaluate the students?

The chart below shows the preferred assessment tools, according to the respondents of the online survey.



Responses to the online survey of the MEDIAREJ project.

Additional comments are listed below:

- A **written essay** can be used to show how a person thinks and puts notions into practice, while **an oral exam** demonstrates if the person is prepared and has the necessary skills to become a trainer.
- **Observation** (while practicing or training) may serve to assess the person while performing the duty.

We preferred (rather than implementing an evaluation for participants) the way of working together, alongside, in which the participant grows together with the older one who has experience: It is a passage of experience and the transmission of experience.

Leonardo Lenzi, Italy

How to evaluate the trainer and training?

The suggestions below serve for students to assess the trainer, but also for the trainer him/herself to assess the work done:

- An (online) **questionnaire** is normally sent to participants at the end of the course. It includes questions (maybe with likert scales) on the training's contents, methods, one's personal involvement, the trainer, the future use of training, and emerging needs and questions.

- A self-assessment process can be done by the trainer as a sort of personal journey that keeps his/her reflective mind active¹⁸. This assessment is useful for the trainer to reflect on problems faced during the training, inner conflicts, relational conflicts, emotional reactions, and to be able to distinguish between what is *his/her* emotional baggage and what belongs to the trainees (or the parties).

Anyone trained in the listening and communication methods and who has undergone, and this is essential, the therapeutic work of his/her own conflicts, will be qualified at some level to face the issues related to restorative processes.

Julián Ríos, Spain

How to proceed with the post-training supervision and assess skills in practice?

Some respondents of the consultation process¹⁹ pointed out the importance of mentoring and monitoring after the RJ training is finished, arguing that without such follow-up, the trainer cannot know if the knowledge and skills acquired during the training are being well implemented. Furthermore, trainees may be discouraged without the appropriate support and environment.



People listening in a training by The Climate Project/Unsplash

¹⁸ Read further about this topic in the literature review, section “Self-Awareness” on page 20 and in the interviews with Julián Ríos, Patrizia Patrizi and Siri Kemeny that will be published in the MEDIAREJ website in October 2021.

¹⁹ Martina Tomić Latinac and Anja Miroslavljević, both having experience with the out of court settlement in Croatia.

8. Resource kit for trainers

This resource kit collects some of the suggestions proposed in the consultation process.

8.1. Publications and virtual materials

UNODC University Module Series: Module 8, Restorative Justice.

UNODC Education for Justice Initiative (E4J).

UNODC (2020) *UNODC Handbook on RJ Programmes*, second edition, Criminal Justice Handbook Series. Viena. United Nations.

Lindsey Pointer & Kathleen McGoey (2021) *Restorative Teaching Tools* (Website).

Horstman, F. (2020) *Step Inside the Circle*. Compassion Prison Project (video).

McCold, P. (1996) *Restorative Justice: The Role of the Community*. In, Burt Galaway and Joe Hudson, eds., *Restorative Justice: International Perspectives*. Monsey, New York: Criminal Justice Press. Pp. 85-101.

Pointer, L. et al. (2020) *The Little Book of Restorative Teaching Tools: Games, Activities, and Simulations for Understanding Restorative Justice Practices*. Good Books.

Pranis, K. (2005). *Little Book of Circle Processes*. New York: Good Books.

Rossner, M. (2013). *Just Emotions*. Clarendon Studies in Criminology.

Umbreit, M. (2000). *The Handbook of Victim Offender Mediation: An Essential Guide to Practice and Research*. Jossey-Bass.

Wright, M. (2002). The paradigm of Restorative Justice. VOMA Connections.

8.2. Training programmes

This short list of organisations/institutions that delivers, as of today, training programmes in restorative justice were mentioned during the consultation process. Some of the trainers of these programmes have also been interviewed/consulted for this part of the project.

- **European Forum for Restorative Justice** [Training programmes](#) and [database](#) of existing academic/teaching programs up to date in Europe and Beyond.
- **Transforming Conflict** (UK) of Belinda Hopkins.
- **Restorative Justice Council (UK)** Training Programmes.
- **International Institute of Restorative Practices** Training programmes.
- **University of Strathclyde** (UK) [Restorative Justice & Practices: Essential Skills Course delivered](#) by Tim Chapman.
- **The Humanities and Social Science Department of the University of Sassari (Italy)** Master in “Restorative Justice and Mediation for the well-being of people and communities”.
- **Janet Clark (UK)** Practitioner Training Course.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

This (non exhaustive) list of conclusions and recommendations draws from both the literature review and consultation process.

Professional and educational background of trainers

- A specific academic background is not needed to become an RJ trainer. Experience as an RJ practitioner is, however, important to be authentic and credible in this work.
- Continuous learning and personal study must be an ongoing process for the trainer, as well as attending conferences and having interdisciplinary experiences touching upon other fields. Training for RJ trainers may include more conventional skills courses (e.g., on teaching, on the psychology of learning), specific training on the topic to be dealt with in the training (e.g., hate crime, sexual violence) and possibly attending as a trainee the same course to be delivered as trainer.

Relational and technical skills of trainers²⁰

- Trainers must practice what they preach, meaning that they must exemplify the restorative values that should be embedded in practice and support trainees in finding their “restorative side”.
- Trainers must decenter themselves to better encourage dialogue among participants. A practical tip is to ask a question and look away (as done in mediation) to make sure that trainees talk to each other, not only with the trainer.
- Trainers must take into account the audience, the conditions, and the environment people are working in, in order to propose contents and methods tailored to the trainees’ and commissioner’s needs.
- Trainers must have inspiring communication styles for delivering fun, energetic, interactive and exciting training. Presentations cannot be too formal and distant and should include exercises and storytelling.

Network of trainers

- Trainers may be part of interdisciplinary groups and networks to become inspired, increase knowledge and skills and cooperate.
- If possible, trainers may work in pairs²¹ to complement each other’s knowledge and skills. This is also relevant for junior trainers who can learn by working with senior trainers.
- Trainers must be aware of the roles of other specialists (e.g., Psychotherapists, social workers, lawyers) who may be invited during the training to fill in the gap with their specific expertise.

20 As mentioned above, relational skills refer to “soft” skills and technical refer to “hard” skills.

21 In the Humanistic Mediation model of Jacqueline Morineau this is an imperative requisite.

Training contents and methods

- Trainers should never try a practical exercise in their training if they did not practice it themselves first.
- Trainers may “look out of the box” by searching for inspiration in other fields as well as in everyday life, especially when explaining restorative values.
- Trainees retain mostly by doing, thus role plays and case studies are much more effective in terms of learning goals when compared to frontal presentations and videos.

Training implementation and assessment

- Training can take place in different formats (face-to-face, blended, online) to respond to different needs of trainees and commissioners. Face-to-face remains the preferred option for the interactive exercises and for creating a sense of community.
- Training must include more interactive exercises, instead of frontal presentations, to create opportunities for practical and experiential learning.
- The training as well as the trainer can be assessed by the students themselves (through an evaluation form at the end of the training) as well as by the trainer him/ herself (through a self-assessment).



Restorative Circle during a Training by Frank Spencer of Redweather Productions

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