

I Forgive You, But You Must Die

Posted on September 28, 2018

A. Explain what the term “restorative justice” means and how it differs from the traditional criminal justice system.

A restorative justice system is a form of bringing the people who have been harmed through crime or even conflict and those who are responsible for that harm together for the purpose of communication, enabling every person who is affected by the specific event to play their part in the repairing of those harms and looking for the positive way to move forward. It can be used anywhere for the prevention of conflicts, building relationships, and repairing the harm caused to others by enabling people to communicate more positively and effectively.

Traditional criminal justice comprises the intervention of the state to remedy the social disapproval behavior that is possessed by a specific person in society. This process aims to punish the offenders according to the crimes committed, and by doing that, it ensures that justice has been served to both the offenders and the victims. This is very different from restorative justice, in which the victim and the offender are brought together for the purpose of communication. Restorative justice follows some steps, the first of which is the creation of a favorable communicating environment. Then the communication can be formal, like in the institution-sponsored “victim/ offender mediation dialogue (VOMD)” in prison, or informal methods which is unsupervised like telephone calls, impromptu visits, letters, emails, etc., for them to have a dialogue conversation (Leo 242). Face-to-face dialogue is considered to be the greatest opportunity for restrictive justice to bridge the gap/ gulf between the victim and the survivor/ offended. The offender has the chance to confront the victim directly with grief and anger to get the motif and the fate of the crime. At last, the victim has the chance to apologize and be forgiven. Both the offender and the victim show feelings of healing and relief.

B. Differentiate between the forgivers and empathizes in this article.

Forgiveness in the article has been described from three perspectives. They include restrictive forgivers, ambivalent forgivers, and redemptive forgivers. Restrictive forgivers are involved in renouncing the hatred of an offender. They have the feeling of meeting with the offender so that they can have a remorseful expression for each other. However, they want the death punishment to proceed. These types of forgivers are psychological/ personal and religious/ ideological. Restrictive forgivers from the ideological perspective forgive based on the values, norms, and beliefs of their

ideology or religion while restrictive forgivers from a psychological perspective forgive due to the desire to save someone's sanity from grips of the hatred and relieve their anger, vengeance, and resentment.

The redemptive forgivers are involved in the relinquishing of vengeance and hatred. They are also willing to spare the life of the offender, reduce the life sentence, and assist that individual to become civil. They believe that the [death penalty](#) is inhumane, and instead, they may prefer a life sentence for the murdered in case it's a must for the person to be punished. In the case of the ambivalent forgivers, they are not sure about the suitability of imposing the death penalty on the offenders, and they passively hold up on it, especially when other members of the family advocate it.

On the other hand, the empathizers do humanize their offenders. They always perceive that an offender becomes dangerous due to his experience, the miserable life in the family, or even the failure of social institutions like the [criminal justice system](#) and the social institute agency to take necessary action. Empathizers are most likely to spread the blame for the criminal acts done to their loved ones, and there is the possibility of them knowing the offender (Doerner and Steven). They accept the apology from an offender, and they are likely to be inclined to dialogue with an offender. However, they believe that the punishment by death will provide them a sense of relief and also relieve the fear and concern of the offender harming the people. Thus, they believe that offenders are dangerous to the whole of society.

C. Is restorative justice a useful technique to use in capital cases? Explain.

I consider restorative justice as the most important technique that should be implemented in capital cases despite the fact that it is difficult to forgive and empathize with the people who are involved in bigger crimes like murder. In the article, it was found that most of the forgivers and empathizers supported the execution before and afterward, and they experienced a feeling of relief. "The forgive but die statement" is being considered in most of the survivors who made use of restorative justice because it helps them have the sense of and therefore controlling negative attitudes and feelings that mostly hung around them after the occurrence of the crime.

The implementation of restorative justice in the death penalty capital case is difficult even when the survivors are willing to go for the mediation dialogue. The postconviction appeals that are mainly found in the death penalty case are the roadblocks to reconciliation. They encourage the victim to look for a way of reducing criminal responsibility and saving a life instead of assuming full accountability for the crime and making apologies to the family offended. This restorative justice system provides an adversarial process that encourages the offender to be able to amend, be accountable, apologize for the wrong acts, and may be subjected to a death sentence, knowing in mind that he had tried to make peace with the family of the victim.

D. What was interesting/ surprising in this article?

The sentiment of “forgiving but dying” is the most surprising aspect of the article. The greatest challenge found in the restorative justice system is implementing it with the death penalty at the end. It is very tricky and also ambiguous to advise and encourage the offender to come and seek amendment, to be accountable for his actions, to apologize for the bad acts to the family members of the person murdered so that he can be eliminated from the world when he has the knowledge of attempting to make peace with the offended family. The essence of seeking forgiveness from the offended family is to allow them to spare the life of the offender but there is no need of being forgiven, and later the offender dies.

On the other hand, for the restrictive forgivers, ambivalent forgives, and empathizers, there is no need to pretend to have forgiven the murderer of your beloved one, yet there is a struggle in renouncing the obsessive feeling of resentment, hatred, vengeance, and also anger which are destroying their soul. It's like most of the forgivers and empathizers who decide to make this decision seek assistance from spiritual advisors and religious and psychological counselors to conclude. But why should they have double thoughts of forgiving, and yet in their hearts, they have a feeling that the offender should die? In case they believe the death of the offender is the only way of getting justice for the death of their beloved one and also as a way of seeking peace of mind, renouncement of vengeance, anger, hatred, etc. Then, the simplest and most direct method of solving this murder case is by seeking the death penalty. This will be a better and easier process of removing the issue from the mind instead of going for the restorative justice system.

E. Reflect on what your response might be in a similar situation. Explain.

In case I were in the same situation as one of the offended people, I would just seek the death of the murderer of my loved one. This is because I believe in the phenomenon of “Tit for Tat is a fair game” (searchquotes.com). Tit for Tat” is the English saying which implies an equivalent retaliation. Therefore, in case the offender murdered one of my family members, then he/ she should also be subjected to murder. That is what I think will be the best way of seeking justice for the death of my family member. I may not consider the alternative of the restorative justice system because I don't want to be subjected to double feelings. The restorative justice system will allow me to humanize the offender and spread the blame for his actions to other institutional agencies, such as criminal justice agencies, that fail to take the appropriate action and experience a miserable life. The system will also allow me to have a dialogue with the offender, and I may accept the apologies if he asks for them. But that will not bring any peace of mind around me. We will only be biting around the bush when the real decision that I have made is seeking his death. Therefore, for my case, I would rather request a direct death penalty instead of involving a restoration justice system.

Works Cited

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