

# RESTORATIVE COMMUNITY DIALOGUE



**ARJAA**

ABBOTSFORD RESTORATIVE JUSTICE  
AND ADVOCACY ASSOCIATION

Repair • Restore • Rebuild • Transform

# TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

Abbotsford Restorative Justice and Advocacy Association (ARJAA) is conducting a Restorative Community Dialogue on homelessness and the impacts that it has in our community. Restorative Community Dialogue is a process that utilizes communication to build relationships as people share their experience of a common concern and collaborate on how to address the issue impacting them. Dialogue helps to reduce division, build a sense of community, and improve communication patterns between stakeholders. When dialogue is successful, it prepares a group to take collective action.

ARJAA designs and facilitates the Restorative Community Dialogues to be a safe and equitable space where people can both listen with intentionality and speak with honesty and integrity. Your voice in this space is valued. You are invited to an initial interview with our ARJAA facilitators where you will have the opportunity to share your experience and perspective on this important issue.

Should you have any questions about the Restorative Community Dialogue process or if you would like to participate in the dialogue happening in your community, please contact Taylor Wilson, a Restorative Practitioner with the Abbotsford Restorative Justice and Advocacy Association.

Sincerely,

Taylor Wilson  
ARJAA, Community Restorative Practitioner

E: [taylor@arjaa.org](mailto:taylor@arjaa.org)



# ARJAA: WHO WE ARE

The Abbotsford Restorative Justice and Advocacy Association (ARJAA) has been a part of the fabric of the Abbotsford community for over 20 years. A non-profit organization that engages community conflict outside of the traditional court system, ARJAA is vitally concerned with finding innovative ways to impart restorative values and practices to our community. Actively applying the restorative justice lens of crime viewed as harm done to people and relationships, rather than the breaking of laws, ARJAA strives to repair harm, restore relationships, rebuild trust and, in doing so, transform the community of Abbotsford.

# BUILDING THRIVING COMMUNITIES

We know that to transform the community of Abbotsford, we need to build a healthy, thriving community. According to the International Institute for Restorative Practices, key components of a thriving community are “community member involvement and multi-sector collaboration... individuals, groups and organizations working together to address issues. Taking into account the social and cultural factors relevant to the community, promotes a sense of health and well-being in a community. People with a greater sense of community are more likely to act in healthy ways and work with others to promote well-being for all.” In other words, when we work together to resolve tension or conflict, we strengthen ourselves and the city in which we live.

# OUR COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Our Community Restorative Practice Program focuses on addressing conflict between community groups, allowing participants the opportunity to have a voice in the issues that affect them. This practice builds relationships and facilitates dialogue that fosters empathy and understanding, bringing a collective grassroots approach to problem solving in the community. Through the use of a Restorative Community Dialogue process, we are able to bring everyone together to address community tensions in a space for dialogue that is safe, trauma informed and equitable for all.



# OUR ROLE & THE RESULTS

ARJAA's role as convener is to identify those who are impacted by community conflict and to engage with them in order to understand their perspective. The goal is to create a safe space for dialogue that will educate, build understanding and empathy as well as work toward shared outcomes, accountability and advocacy. We bring community members together in a structured space that allows for facilitated conversation and enables a shared understanding about stated goals and hopes for the future. As facilitators we are not decision makers-rather it is the dialogue participants who will have the opportunity to build a shared understanding about what the future could look like.

Restorative Community Dialogue is a long-term approach to addressing conflict. Working through conflict with a long term lens addresses difficult questions related to relationships, resources, and structures. It enables communities and those who live there to solve problems and determine the outcomes that best fit THEIR communities, together. Should you choose to participate, you will have the opportunity to learn how other people in the community are impacted by homelessness, and to share your own thoughts. In doing so, you will make valuable connections with others in your community, while collaborating on best paths moving forward. At the end of the process, ARJAA will assemble a report that documents how people in Abbotsford are impacted by homelessness, including creative solutions for addressing the challenges we are facing as a community. The report will be made available to municipal and provincial levels of government.

# THE RESTORATIVE COMMUNITY DIALOGUE PROCESS

