

RESTITUTION PLAN

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Restitution is the process of “paying back” the victim of any kind of abuse. Obviously, you can never make up for what you did to your victim, but you can do some things which make the victimization a little less terrible. Often it is not possible to make direct restitution to your victim as this would cause additional damage to the victim. In these situations you can only make restitution to victims in general.

Why bother making restitution? Oftentimes, the court will require restitution as part of the sentencing process. In this case, you may be motivated to make restitution because of fear of court sanctions. Although this may help the victim deal with their situation, it does little for you as a perpetrator. From a therapeutic standpoint, restitution is important to remind you of your responsibility to the victim and to help you remain sensitive to the damage that your behavior caused. Restitution is one way to help keep you motivated to do things that keep you safe as you are constantly reminded of the damage you did.

Restitution is not an event, but rather, it is a process. That is, it is not something that you do once and forget about it, it is something that you continue to do for the rest of your life. A restitution plan is a contract with yourself identifying what you will do to pay back your victim for what you took from them. This contract should be written out and signed by you. It should include specific activities that you will carry out. It must also be realistic given your current living situation and the living situation you are likely to have several years from now. If your plan is not realistic, you will not follow through with it and your restitution plan becomes nothing more than a hoop that you are doing to make a good impression on your therapist.

Although it usually doesn't help to be told what to do for restitution, the following are a few examples of things that people in the past have found useful:

1. Provide money (a percentage of your monthly income) to survivor's groups/ organizations.
2. Contract with yourself to participate in all research involving perpetrators that you can find to involve yourself in.
3. Contract with yourself to participate in all interviews of perpetrators that are requested of you (i.e., news reports, counselor training, etc.).
4. Conduct videotape interviews for use with survivor's groups, the training of Children Services workers, court personnel, etc.