

Long Abstract – Monographic Section

INVESTING IN THE SOCIAL REINTEGRATION CARE FOR DETAINEES: TRENDS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES OF THE ITALIAN WELFARE SYSTEM

edited by Alberto Pesce e Veronica Valenti

Promote restorative culture and peer support in the prison context: the RI.PA.RA.RE. project in the Cremona Prison

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Starting from the critical issues of the penitentiary system, the authors claim the importance of implementing initiatives that, starting from the analysis of the context, can promote individual and social empowerment in the penitentiary context.

The paper describes the experience of the project “RI.PA.RA.RE. Mending Parts Mending Relationships”, implemented from 2022 by the Prison and Territory Association of Brescia in the Cremona Prison. The initiative was born from the intertwining of restorative culture and peer support, which share several elements.

The restorative approach is based on responsibility, on the recognition of the Other Self, on choice and voluntariness, which are expressed in proactivity, promoting self-responsibility and empowerment; the restorative paradigm has an intrinsic ability “to put rights the wrongs” and therefore a problem can become a project.

Thus peer-to-peer support is also characterized by potential in protective terms, relational perspective, ability to transform the problem into a project, promotion of empowerment and self-responsibility through voluntariness, proactivity and recognition of the Other Self: the union of these two approaches can give life to a circular relationship that can become a multiplier of restorative culture.

Talking about restorative culture means first of all widening the optical cone of the restorative paradigm to include within it tools and methodologies that are not limited to the Justice system, rather emphasizing its relational and community dimensions; it means (re)generating relationships, also through the culture of “doing with”, which requires the active involvement of all the parties.

Various actions are included in this project: general meetings for the promotion of restorative approach, individual interviews, specific paths on relationships and restorative culture, training of peer-to-peer supporters and implementation of initiatives designed by the participants in these paths, in which they are a proactive and driving force. In the final part of the paper, the authors highlight how the interweaving of restorative approach and peer support has resulted in projects conceived and proposed by inmates, and implemented thanks to the synergy with the Institution and the contribution of penitentiary volunteers.

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