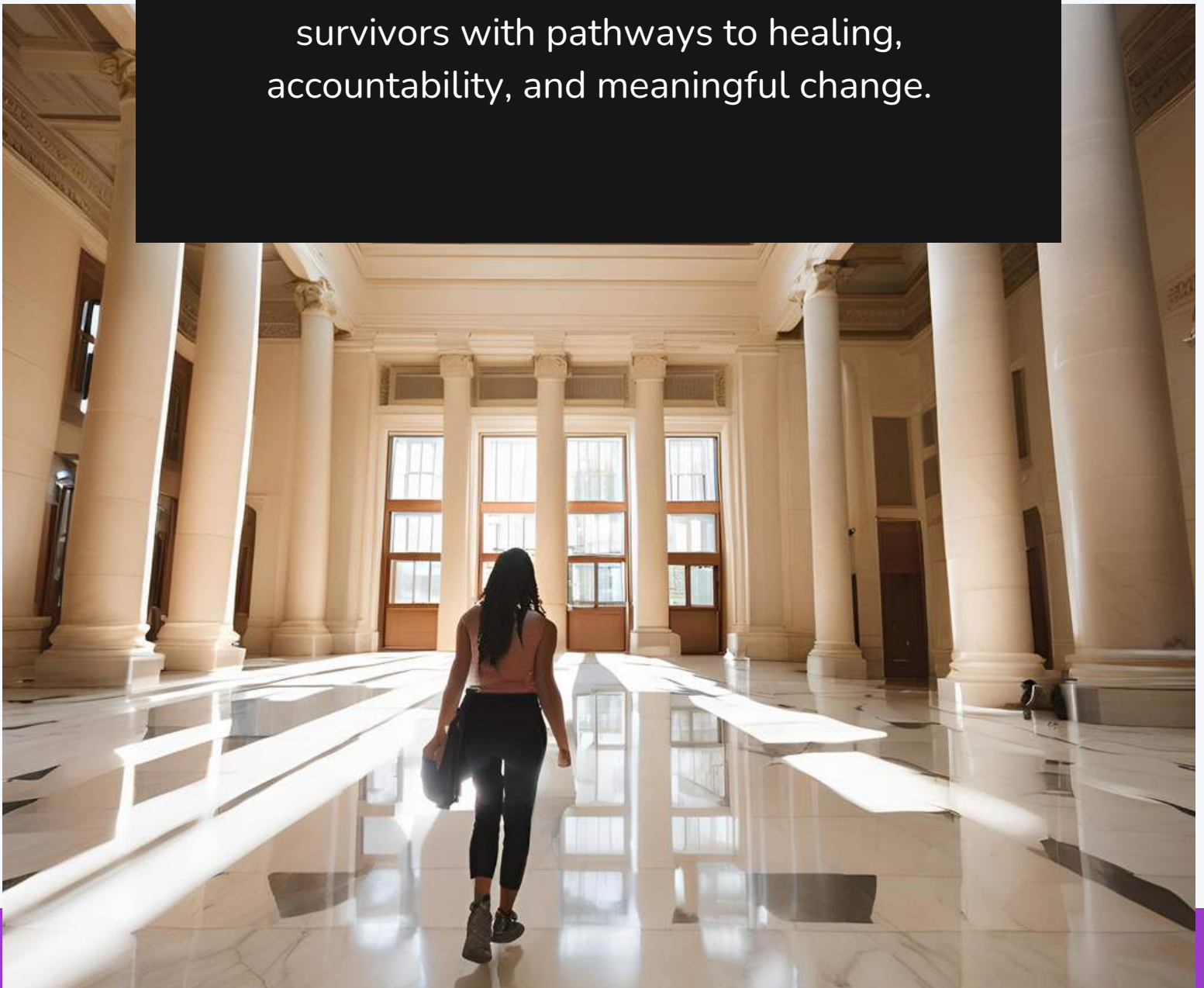


UNSILENCED

A SURVIVOR'S GUIDE TO THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE

A comprehensive guide to empower TTI survivors with pathways to healing, accountability, and meaningful change.



SPONSORS



Gochnauer Family Foundation

The Gochnauer Family Foundation was established in December of 1998 to give back part of the many blessings our family has received, to teach stewardship across generations, and to cultivate seeds that yield high returns in the support of those in need.

Survivor resources were developed to empower survivors, educate stakeholders, and drive meaningful change in our fight for justice and the protection of vulnerable youth. We invite our supporters to show their support through sponsoring these innovative and essential resources through scanning this QR code, clicking [HERE](#)



At Unsilenced, we are proud to partner with sponsors who are as committed as we are to creating meaningful change for survivors of institutional abuse. As a nonprofit, these sponsorships allow us to continue offering vital resources—like survivor guides, attorney directories, support groups, and educational tools—completely free to those who need them. Every sponsorship directly supports the creation, distribution, and availability of these tools, ensuring that survivors have access to the support they deserve. We are deeply thankful for the support that helps us stay focused on our mission of empowering survivors and advancing justice.



INTRODUCTION

You've come to the realization of what happened to you while you were in the Troubled Teen Industry (TTI), and now you may be wondering, "What's next?" This guide was designed to help you with that. Created to empower TTI survivors, it offers clear, actionable advice to support your advocacy, personal healing, and pursuit of accountability within the industry. Justice means different things to different people, and this resource will help you explore the various paths available, guiding you step by step toward the justice that feels right for you.

WHAT IS JUSTICE?

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, justice is defined as the fair and impartial maintenance or administration of what is just. It involves the equitable resolution of conflicting claims and the appropriate allocation of deserved rewards or punishments.

Unsilenced recognizes the significance of justice as a core principle. We are dedicated to ensuring that fairness prevails for all individuals, particularly survivors of the Troubled Teen Industry by advocating for equal treatment, protecting rights, and ensuring justice. Our objective is to establish a secure and inclusive environment where individuals' rights are safeguarded and merited outcomes are determined based on objective standards.

We firmly believe in upholding justice as a fundamental value. Through promoting justice, we aim to cultivate a community built on trust, respect, and accountability where survivors work towards creating a desired impact.

Justice (jus•tice) *noun*

the maintenance or administration of what is **just**, especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments

Synonym: right

Antonym: wrong



TYPES OF DESIRED IMPACT

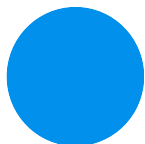
Every survivor's path to justice is unique. While some find comfort in holding perpetrators accountable, others seek validation for their trauma. Justice isn't one-size-fits-all; it varies based on individual needs. For some, it involves advocating for others and preventing harm; for others, it means personal recovery, inner peace, or legal action.

The list below outlines common impacts survivors seek in their pursuit of justice. Reflect on what resonates with you—whether it's restitution, pushing for change, or accessing recovery support, each type offers closure and empowerment for both yourself and others.



Validation and Acknowledgment

You desire and value having your experiences recognized and your voice heard. This type of justice affirms that what happened to you was real and significant, acknowledging the pain and trauma you've endured.



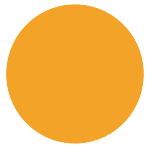
Accountability

You desire to see those who wronged you held responsible for their actions. This type of justice ensures that the people or institutions responsible for your suffering are brought to justice, facing the consequences of their actions.



Restitution

You feel entitled to compensation and resources to rebuild your life. This type of justice provides financial or material compensation to help you recover from the harm done and regain stability.



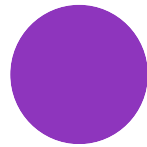
Prevention and Reform

You want to know that what happened to you won't happen to others. This type of justice focuses on creating changes that prevent future abuses and helps ensure safer environments for others.



Support and Healing

You require access to resources and support to heal from your trauma. This type of justice ensures you have the emotional, psychological, and practical support necessary for your healing journey.



Advocacy and Awareness

You feel empowered by raising awareness about the issues you've faced and advocating for change. This type of justice involves using your voice to highlight the injustices you've experienced and pushing for systemic changes that can protect others in the future

Each type of desired impact can shape your concept of justice and recovery. Once you identify the impacts that resonate with you, the next step is to explore the different types of justice to find the path that best fits your journey. Reflect on how these types of justice align with your desired impacts.

To make this easier, we've included an illustration at the end of this guide to show how each type of justice connects with the six desired impacts. This visual aid will help you focus on the justice paths that align with your needs and preferences.

MAKE AN IMPACT



TYPES OF JUSTICE

- **RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE**
- **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**
- **DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE**
- **SOCIAL JUSTICE**
- **CORRECTIVE JUSTICE**
- **PROCEDURAL JUSTICE**
- **COMMUNAL JUSTICE**
- **ECONOMIC JUSTICE**



Each type of justice offers survivors a path or opportunity to seek redress. This section will explore the various types of justice in depth, including the motivation driving it, its definition and philosophy, its potential impacts on survivors, and examples of how survivors can achieve it.

RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE



Motivation

To ensure accountability by punishment for wrongdoing.

Definition & Philosophy

Retributive justice aims to hold accountable and punish offenders of abuse. This punishment is typically done through criminal investigations that lead to prosecutions or civil lawsuits that impose punishments. The result of these lawsuits and investigations may lead to the offender facing incarceration or incurring fines, depending on what the law allows. Unlike corrective justice, which focuses on addressing and rectifying the harm done to survivors through compensation and systemic reforms, retributive justice is more concerned with punishing the wrongdoer.

Impact on Survivors

Validation and Acknowledgment: Holding abusers accountable through punishment helps validate the survivor's experiences as being real. Seeing offenders face legal consequences helps validate the survivor's pain and trauma. It can help acknowledge the seriousness of what they endured.

Accountability: When survivors see their abusers punished for the harm they caused, it allows them to feel that accountability is finally taken.

Support and Healing: The validation felt by seeing those who hurt you held responsible can play a significant role in healing. Many times, this offers emotional closure and empowers survivors to move forward.

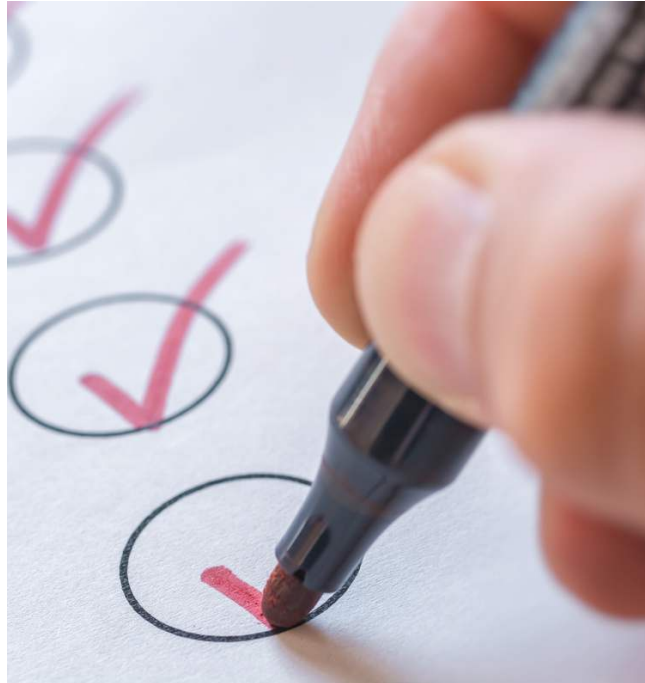
Advocacy and Awareness: Legal actions frequently draw public attention to the issues within the TTI. High-profile cases often end up attracting national attention, which can drive awareness about the prevalence of abuse within the entire industry. This attention leads to increased scrutiny of TTI programs and advocacy efforts, which can encourage other survivors to come forward.

Prevention and Reform: The outcomes of criminal and civil cases can also create precedents, reforms in enacted laws, and regulations enforced that could contribute to broader systemic change.



Examples & Ways to Enact:

File a Police Report: Notify the authorities about the abuse, providing as much detail as you can. This includes dates, locations, and any witnesses. It's important to keep your evidence secure, as this will aid the investigation. Be aware of any time limits for reporting, since acting quickly can be vital. Keeping your evidence safe is crucial for supporting the investigation.



File Criminal Complaints: Inform law enforcement about the abuse to kickstart criminal investigations and possible prosecutions against the offender. The decision to pursue charges rests with the District Attorney, but filing complaints helps hold perpetrators accountable within the legal system.

Work with Prosecutors: Collaborate with the prosecutors who will take the case to court. They advocate for both the state and the survivor, aiming for a conviction and suitable sentencing. Survivors' voices need to be part of this process, and collaborating with prosecutors can make a difference.

Advocate for Sentencing: Collaborate with legal teams to ensure the court grasps the full impact of the crime, which can help shape the severity of the sentence.

Testify in Court: Offer your testimony as a witness in criminal cases against TTI programs or staff. Survivor testimony is often vital for achieving justice.

“Retribution is not about vengeance; it's about balance. To right a wrong, we must hold accountable those who have caused harm and ensure they face the consequences of their actions.”

-Unknown

Join Class Action Lawsuits: Get involved in or start class action lawsuits against TTI programs to pursue collective justice for systemic abuse. Class actions can tackle widespread harm and frequently lead to substantial penalties.

Advocate for Stricter Laws: Work to promote tougher laws and regulations for TTI programs and push for harsher penalties for those that persist in abusive practices. Implementing stronger laws can help deter future abuse.

Participate in Victim Impact Statements: Deliver victim impact statements during sentencing hearings to influence the severity of the punishment for abusers. These statements provide the court with personal insights into the harm caused.

Support Law Enforcement Efforts: Collaborate with law enforcement by providing evidence, participating in interviews, or helping to locate other survivors who might testify. Cooperation with authorities can strengthen cases against abusers.

Campaign for Legal Reforms: Advocate for legal reforms that make it easier to prosecute TTI abuses, such as extending statutes of limitations or creating specialized units for institutional abuse cases. Legal reforms can enhance the ability to hold abusers accountable.

Potential Challenges:

One major hurdle in retributive justice is the emotional burden of participating in a criminal court case. Things like having to relive a traumatic offense or the risk that the perpetrator won't be convicted can be very hard for the survivor to navigate. The process can also take a long time (usually many years, depending on the jurisdiction).

Mitigating Challenges:

Survivors can benefit from ongoing emotional support from therapists or support groups and legal counsel who practices trauma-informed law during the legal process. Collaborating with victim advocacy organizations that can offer survivors support, resources, and guidance will also help.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE



Motivation

To repair harm by fostering understanding, reconciliation, and healing between survivors and offenders.

Definition & Philosophy

Restorative justice is built on the premise of healing, reconciliation, and raising awareness. Restorative justice focuses on processes that enable all parties (including program owners, staff, former therapists, and others who may have caused harm in the TTI) to acknowledge the abuse, accept responsibility for it, and find ways to repair the relationship.

However, because direct engagement with abusers may not be possible, recommended, or desired, restorative justice can still be achieved by survivors through community engagement activities and groups. These activities can help raise awareness of the issues within the TTI so that both public acknowledgment and advocacy by activists can lead to broader systemic change.

Disclosure: Please note that some elements of restorative justice can be controversial, and while we include it in this guide for transparency and inclusivity, it is crucial to understand that it may not be suitable for every survivor. Some practices can be highly triggering, potentially traumatic, and, in some instances, not healthy or safe.

Impact on Survivors

Validation and Acknowledgment: Restorative justice brings survivors into the repair process, allowing them to share their stories with those who caused the harm. This process opens the doors to the abuser being able to validate and acknowledge the damage they caused.

Support and Healing: Healing for the survivor and the broader community is a central focus of restorative processes. Collective healing is encouraged, and survivors are offered closure.

Prevention and Reform: Public acknowledgment from those who have caused harm can help prevent others from making the same mistake and bring forward others who want to acknowledge it. These acts could lead to broader systemic reform.

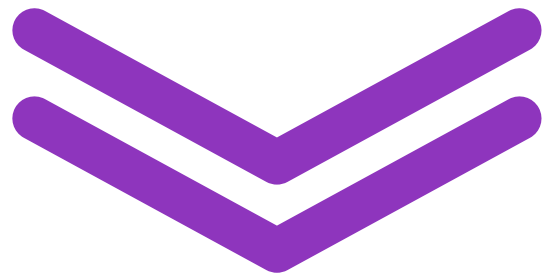
Advocacy and Awareness: In addition to listening to survivors and the community about what harm has occurred, restorative processes can raise awareness about the TTI and culture of abuse. If there is a public acknowledgment of the harm and the attempts to repair it, this can lead to more advocacy for broader changes in the TTI.

“Restorative justice begins when we see that healing, not punishment, is the only path to true justice. It’s about mending the wounds of both the harmed and the harmer, and rebuilding what was broken.”

-Desmond Tutu



Examples & Ways to Enact



Participate in Survivor Groups: Join peer-led restorative groups to share experiences and support each other's healing without the direct involvement of the abusers. These groups focus on mutual healing and understanding

Organize Community Dialogues: Facilitate public discussions that focus on the harms caused by the TTI and explore ways the community can help survivors heal. These dialogues can promote collective healing.

Start or Contribute to Truth-Telling Projects: Take part in or create initiatives that document and share survivor stories in a way that fosters healing and acknowledgment of the harm done. Truth-telling projects help ensure that the harm is recognized and remembered.

Engage in Community-Based Restorative Projects: Start projects that focus on the transgressions done to help restore the people or community that was harmed, such as memorialization, institutional apologies, or public service projects.

Attend Restorative Conferences: Attend conferences or workshops that bring together survivors, community leaders, and TTI institution representatives to reflect on the impact of abuse and how best to respond to it.

Support Restorative Justice Legislation: Lobby for laws that promote or require restorative justice modalities within the TTI, such as mandated reconciliation meetings. Legislative support can institutionalize restorative practices.

Create Survivor-Led Initiatives: Start survivor-led projects that incorporate restorative practices. Things like peer support networks and survivor advocacy groups can give survivors a sense of control and agency

Partner with Advocacy Organizations: Partner with organizations specializing in restorative justice and collaborate on developing TTI-specific projects to expand the reach and impact of restorative practices for survivors.

Mediation: Find a neutral third-party mediator who can help facilitate a conversation between the survivor and the offender.

Potential Challenges

There are some considerable obstacles to restorative justice, especially for TTI survivors. As trauma survivors, many may not want any interaction with their abusers. Engagement with their abusers, even indirectly, could be too traumatic. It is a controversial form of justice, as it might not satisfy every survivor's need for closure. For instance, even if the survivor feels ready to participate in restorative justice with their abuser, that abuser may not be willing or able to participate, which can lead to disappointment or frustration for the survivor. These dynamics can create complications and have the potential to leave some survivors feeling uncomfortable or even further traumatized.

This type of justice can be even further complicated if both parties are not willing participants and the abuser isn't able to admit they did anything wrong or if the survivor doesn't feel safe enough to be in that situation. The risk of retraumatization is very high if the encounter isn't handled appropriately, so qualified professionals must supervise these encounters.

Mitigating Challenges

With all of these obstacles standing in the way, survivors must proceed with realistic expectations and recognize that restorative justice may not be suitable for their own emotional needs. Survivors must be emotionally prepared before considering restorative justice because the process involves not only facing one's past but often at least subconsciously reentering the circumstances of one's abuse.

An essential first step in evaluating if restorative justice is right for you is exploring other forms of restorative practices that don't involve face-to-face interaction with your abuser. Focusing on things within the TTI community and engaging in community-based restorative justice, including survivor support groups and public discussions about the effects of TTI abuses, can help survivors feel heard, acknowledged, and healed without having to confront their abusers face-to-face.

If survivors choose face-to-face contact with any offenders, they should do so while working with experienced, trauma-informed mediators. Survivors should also be offered pre- and post-emotional counseling support, including peer support groups, because the experience will likely involve an array of complex emotions. In addition, survivors' paces must be honored; if they encounter resistance or find it difficult to participate, that is reason enough to pause or withdraw entirely from the process.

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE



Motivation

To ensure fair allocation of resources and support, address inequalities, and equitably meet the needs of all individuals.

Definition & Philosophy

Distributive justice for TTI survivors focuses on ensuring a fair allocation of resources or opportunities to help survivors get back on their feet. These efforts can include a civil lawsuit to secure compensation, seeking out victim compensation funds, or trying to create scholarships, housing relief, or other forms of economic relief for survivors. In the event there is a civil lawsuit, the purpose of the lawsuit is not retribution or punishment but to find the necessary resources to get the survivor back on their feet and to minimize the economic fallout that resulted because of the abuse experienced.

Impact on Survivors

“Justice means giving each person what they are due. It is about fair distribution of resources so that no one is left to struggle while others thrive.”

-Aristotle

Restitution: Distributive justice directly provides survivors with restitution through financial compensation to recover from the harm they experienced.

Support and Healing: Accessing resources, support, and opportunities that otherwise wouldn't have been available can significantly contribute to a survivor's healing journey.

Validation and Acknowledgment: When survivors receive compensation or access to resources, it can serve as an acknowledgment of the harm they've experienced. This recognition helps validate their experiences and the trauma's impact on their lives.

Examples & Ways to Enact

File Civil Lawsuits for Compensation: Pursue civil litigation against TTI institutions for the damages inflicted by seeking financial compensation. This compensation allows for survivors to be able to recover economically from the personal effects of the abuse.

Apply for Victim Compensation Funds: Apply for victim compensation funds to help pay for things like counseling or medical bills that resulted from the abuse. These funds are a vital financial resource for many survivors who are eligible for them.

Advocate for Economic Support Programs: Advocate for creating scholarships, housing support, or job-training programs for TTI survivors.



Lobby for Financial Restitution Laws: Lobby for legislation that holds TTI programs criminally liable for the harm caused to survivors and requires those institutions to give compensation to the survivors who were financially affected as a result of the abuse.

Participate in Class Action Settlements: Receive compensation by being a part of “class action settlements,” where groups of survivors seek a collective settlement. When many survivors experience the exact same type of mistreatment, class action lawsuits can be an essential source of financial recovery.

Crowdfunding Campaigns: Contribute to or help share crowdfunding campaigns to help support survivors' economic needs in the community. These crowdfunding efforts can provide immediate financial relief for survivors struggling to pay medical bills, educational costs, childcare, mortgages, and rent.

Seeking Restitution through Negotiation: Pursue negotiated settlements directly with TTI institutions to secure financial compensation without filing a lawsuit. This approach can be faster and less stressful than litigation.

Partner with Nonprofits: Work with nonprofit organizations that provide funding and resources to survivors. Help them create awareness of their programs by sharing their content and spreading the word to ensure more survivors become aware of the help available.

Potential Challenges

It can be complex and challenging to navigate the legal or bureaucratic systems to obtain compensation. Survivors might also need help proving their levels of damage or face an institution that is reluctant to acknowledge or pay damages.

Mitigating Challenges

Survivors should seek legal representation to assist with navigating the procedural obstacles of pursuing distributive justice through legal avenues. Connecting with advocacy groups who can aid in finding cultural and material support for survivors will also be helpful. Maintaining detailed notes and documentation of your experiences can strengthen your case if you seek compensation.

SOCIAL JUSTICE



Motivation

To ensure equal rights and opportunities for all members of society.

Definition & Philosophy

Social justice advocates for systemic change to address the widespread abuse within the TTI. It involves fighting for the rights of survivors, working to expose harmful practices within the industry, and challenging the systems and laws that allow the abuse to continue. Survivor voices are at the heart of social justice, and ensuring they are heard and supported is essential.

Impact on Survivors

Validation and Acknowledgement: Bringing these issues into the public conversation provides a form of validation for survivors. It validates that the pain and trauma stemming from what happened to them warrants societal attention.

Accountability: Social justice often involves advocating for transparency, awareness, and systemic change, which can lead to institutions and individuals being held accountable for their actions. When advocacy leads to the exposure of wrongdoing and pressures institutions to make changes or forces law enforcement to take action, it can indirectly or directly contribute to accountability.

Prevention and Reform: Advocating for legislative reforms and better oversight of TTI institutions helps ensure that harmful practices are not repeated, hopefully contributing to future reform and safer environments.

Advocacy and Awareness: Survivors who engage in social justice efforts use their voices to expose injustices and create systemic changes by ensuring public awareness of the issues.

Support and Healing: By finding purpose in advocating for change, survivors can experience personal empowerment, contributing to their healing journey. Additionally, social activism often involves working with like-minded individuals who understand the survivor's experiences. This communal support can provide emotional and psychological resources that help survivors heal as they work together toward a common goal.



Examples & Ways to Enact

Share Your Story on Social Media: Use social media platforms like X, Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok to share your experiences and raise awareness about the abusive practices within the TTI. Social media platforms help amplify survivor voices, unite survivors, and educate the public.



Lobby for Legislative Reforms: Lobby for new legislation or amendments to existing legal frameworks to strengthen protections for children in residential care facilities. Lobbying efforts can lead to systemic change and increased protection.

Join Advocacy Organizations: Get involved with organizations like Unsilenced that expose TTI abuses and promote systemic change. This involvement helps drive collective action and policy reform.

Organize Public Awareness Campaigns: Design or participate in campaigns that bring attention to the vulnerabilities of the TTI. Marches, petitions, online movement campaigns, and social media campaigns can be very effective. The more awareness around the issue, the more pressure to change.

Testify at Legislative Hearings: Provide testimony during legislative hearings to advocate for stronger protections and accountability measures. This direct involvement of survivor voices in the legislative process can influence policymakers.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Social justice calls for the dismantling of systems of oppression so that every person can live free and equal."

-Martin Luther King Jr.



Educate the Public: Create educational content, such as videos, blogs, or articles, to teach the public about the dangers of the TTI. Educational content can also be through writing about personal experiences, such as an autobiography or memoir.

Participate in Documentaries or Media Interviews: Share your story through documentaries, podcasts, or interviews to create mass awareness. Use media to your advantage. Media spotlights can lead to pressure for change.

Collaborating with Influencers: Work with social media influencers, well-known public figures, or celebrities to help promote your message to the masses. By doing so, influencers will help you spread your message quickly and effectively.

Write FOIA and State Record Requests: FOIA allows individuals to request records from federal agencies, while state-specific open records laws apply to state and local entities. Both types of requests can uncover crucial information, such as police records, emails from licensing agencies, 911 calls, and more, to expose abusive practices. Unsilenced maintains a [program archive](#) with over 100,000 documents on 3,500+ programs, aiming to force transparency, influence change, and hold institutions accountable. Unsilenced has also created a [guide to writing these requests](#) to assist survivors in accessing this vital information.

Obtaining Your/Others Records: Receiving records will enable survivors to collect potential evidence of past abuse that they might use in their advocacy, legal actions, or public awareness campaigns. Obtaining records can also be very healing for survivors. Unsilenced has created a helpful [GUIDE](#) for those who want to receive their records. It's important to act quickly, as each state has record destruction laws that could result in your records being permanently deleted after a certain period. If you're too late in obtaining your records, consider gathering witness statements, personal notes, or any other available documentation to support your case.



Potential Challenges

The primary challenge is the potential for burnout, as social justice work can be emotionally taxing and labor-intensive. This type of activism can also be very triggering when you spend so much of your time being vulnerable, telling your story, or hearing about traumatic events. There's also the risk of facing resistance or backlash from those who defend the TTI, which can be discouraging and triggering. Another potential challenge is ensuring that the way you are telling your story steers clear of any statements that the abuser can claim are defamation. Defamation, or the act of communicating false statements that injure an individual's reputation, can put a survivor at risk of facing legal action.

Mitigating Challenges

Survivors must set healthy boundaries to prevent burnout and ensure they take care of themselves emotionally. A solid support network of other advocates can help with emotional and practical support. It is also vital to stay focused on smaller, more achievable steps. Furthermore, learning how to talk about your experiences in ways that ensure your abusers can't claim defamation is essential for those who plan on sharing their stories in a public forum.

CORRECTIVE JUSTICE



Motivation

To rectify imbalances caused by wrongful acts.

Definition & Philosophy

Corrective justice aims to remedy the injustices and imbalances that happened to survivors of the TTI. Its central focus is to address the harm done and hold those responsible accountable by using corrective measures. Corrective justice is different from retributive justice in that it focuses on addressing and rectifying the harm that was done to survivors through compensation and systemic reforms. In contrast, retributive justice focuses on punishing the wrongdoer. The main goal of corrective justice is to restore fairness by addressing the wrongs committed through compensation and driving necessary reforms to prevent recurrence.

Impact on Survivors

Validation and Acknowledgment: Legal victories for survivors can serve as a powerful acknowledgment and validation of the abuse they have had to go through. The public nature of some lawsuits can also bring out other survivors from the same program with similar stories, which can further validate them.

Accountability: When survivors can get a legal judgment against the person or program that harmed them, they finally feel like someone is being held responsible.

Support and Healing: Holding a perpetrator accountable through corrective measures can contribute profoundly to the survivor's ability to heal and provide a sense of empowerment and closure.

Restitution: Financial compensation to the victim is often part of the legal outcomes when using corrective measures. While it is true that no amount of money could ever reverse the harm done, this compensation can help lessen the financial imbalance that the abuse caused and play a vital role in providing survivors with the necessary resources to rebuild their lives.

Advocacy and Awareness: Most types of corrective justice can help raise awareness about the problems impacting the TTI. For instance, civil cases often serve as a catalyst for other survivors to come forward and seek justice.

Prevention and Reform: The public nature of a lawsuit and its awareness can also bring broader awareness to the systemic issues within the TTI, leading to more comprehensive reforms and protections. A successful lawsuit can also set a legal precedent that influences future cases and drives systemic change. When a lawsuit exposes systemic issues within the TTI, it can prompt institutional reforms and lead to changes in laws or regulations that help prevent future abuses.





"Corrective justice seeks to repair the harm done, not just by punishing wrongdoers but by making the victims whole. It is about restoring balance, acknowledging the pain, and ensuring that those who have suffered can reclaim their dignity and rebuild their lives."

-Unknown

Examples & Ways to Enact

File Civil Lawsuits: Survivors can seek compensation and corrective measures through legal action against the TTI programs or the staff responsible for their abuse in order to hold the system accountable and identify the mistakes made. These corrective actions are necessary steps toward restitution.

Documenting Physical Evidence: If you have any physical evidence of the abuse, be sure to keep it in a safe place. Documenting things like photographs of injuries, scars, or any objects used to inflict harm is crucial to building your case. Physical evidence can support your claims and strengthen your civil case.

Submit Regulatory Complaints: File formal complaints with state or federal agencies that could trigger investigations and sanctions against TTI institutions that failed to protect those in their care. While it doesn't always guarantee that agencies will take action, it can lead to stricter oversight and compliance when the complaints reach the right people.

Negotiate Settlements: Work with legal representatives to negotiate settlements that include financial compensation and commitments to institutional change. Settlements help to ensure that the harm is addressed both materially and systemically.



Engage in Public Advocacy: Speak publicly to demand corrective actions such as policy changes and closing abusive facilities. Your voice can create pressure for reform and accountability.

Support Whistleblowers: Encourage and support former staff or insiders from TTI programs to come forward with information that can lead to corrective action. The data they have can help expose ongoing issues and lead to necessary changes. Keep in mind that this type of work can be triggering to some survivors who had awful experiences with former staff.

Collaborate with Regulatory Bodies: Collaborate with the agencies responsible for enforcing regulations and corrective measures at TTI programs to ensure action is taken when needed. These regulatory bodies may include State Departments of Health or Human Services, State Departments of Education, and State Licensing Boards.

Potential Challenges

If there is civil litigation, it may involve lengthy and stressful litigation, survivors may lack evidence or a powerful, well-resourced institution may stand in the way, and states may bar survivor-plaintiffs with statutes of limitation that are too short for many survivors to seek this kind of action legally. Corrective justice, in general, is a slower-paced type of justice that can be tedious and time-consuming and may require more knowledge of the justice system and local laws and regulations.

Mitigating Challenges

Survivors seeking corrective justice through civil cases should work with experienced legal professionals who are knowledgeable about the industry and can provide a realistic assessment of their case. It also benefits them and their case to join forces with other survivors from the same program to strengthen their case and help each other through the legal process (as in a class action lawsuit). Emotional support from therapists or support groups is also crucial to help manage the stress of litigation and many times can be extremely helpful for your case.

PROCEDURAL JUSTICE



Motivation

To ensure that legal and administrative processes are fair, just transparent, and respectful to all parties.

Definition & Philosophy

Procedural justice ensures that the processes used to address TTI abuses are fair and respectful. Creating a system where survivors can trust that their cases will be treated fairly and without bias is crucial. Activism should focus on promoting trauma-informed practices in court, making sure survivors have access to solid legal representation, and pushing for changes that make legal processes easier and more supportive for everyone involved. Procedural justice also involves raising awareness about why fair legal processes matter, as well as working for changes that ensure all survivors are treated fairly. By focusing on fairness and addressing biases, procedural justice helps drive broader reforms that benefit everyone involved.

Impact on Survivors

Validation and Acknowledgment: When a survivor knows that their case was heard fairly and transparently and that their rights are being upheld, it helps validate their experiences and acknowledge their pain.

Accountability: When fair and just legal processes can hold perpetrators responsible, survivors can finally feel that accountability is being taken for the harm done to them.

Support and Healing: Having trauma-informed, respectful, and inclusive legal systems can significantly lower the chances of retraumatization for survivors. It can also help the survivor heal by promoting safety and fairness in handling cases.

Advocacy and Awareness: Campaigns to promote awareness of why having fair and transparent legal processes are essential to survivors of the TTI are very important. Advocacy for procedural reform, publicizing the reality of injustice, and educating others about rights help to increase public awareness and catalyze systemic change.





"The fairness of the procedures by which decisions are made is just as important as the fairness of the decisions themselves. Procedural justice ensures that individuals are given equal respect and consideration, and that the rules are applied consistently and transparently. It upholds the integrity of justice by safeguarding the process through which rights and responsibilities are determined, making fairness not just an outcome but a principle that governs all decisions."

-John Rawls

Examples & Ways to Enact

File Formal Complaints: [Submit formal complaints](#) to licensing boards, regulatory agencies, or ombudspersons to ensure cases are properly and independently investigated. Complaints can ensure institutions are held accountable through the proper channels of the law and allow regulatory bodies to track programs.

Advocate for Trauma-Informed Legal Practices: Work with legal advocates and agencies to urge the courtrooms and the legal system to aid and encourage trauma-informed approaches to support and protect survivors when they navigate the court system. This advocacy allows for conversations about how it can come into the courtroom without the fear of being retraumatized in what can already be a dehumanizing process.

Participate in Public Hearings: Testifying at government public hearings or attending meetings about proposed regulations and reforms in the industry is a way for survivors to ensure their voices are heard and play a significant role in government decision-making

Help Survivors Request Case Reviews: If a survivor believes their case was not handled fairly, you can help them request a review or appeal of the decision.

Campaign for Transparency in Legal Processes: Survivors can advocate for greater transparency in the handling of cases involving TTI survivors. Pushing for clear communication about the progress of cases, ensuring survivors are kept informed of developments and promoting policies that require legal processes to be open and accessible are critical things to focus on.

Engage with Legal Aid Organizations: Get to know local legal aid organizations and help survivors connect with them when they need support. These organizations are vital for those who might struggle to access legal representation. They can guide survivors through the judicial process, protect their rights, and ensure survivors are treated fairly along the way.

Educate Other Survivors: By sharing their experiences and insights, survivors can educate others on how to navigate the legal system effectively. This education can take various forms, like mentoring fellow survivors, creating informational materials, or participating in workshops. The goal is to empower survivors with the knowledge they need to achieve procedural justice.



Potential Challenges

Legal and bureaucratic processes can be challenging to navigate and could deter survivors from wanting to be involved. They could also feel that these processes are procedurally biased or unjust in some way.

Mitigating Challenges

Survivors should know their rights throughout the process and receive education on navigating the system successfully. Hiring an attorney who is aware of trauma-informed practices will help with this. Advocating for changes in procedures is important to ensure that the systems in place are fair and accessible for survivors. Being aware of their rights and understanding the legal process can help survivors feel more confident and less overwhelmed by the challenges they face in the legal system.

COMMUNAL JUSTICE



Motivation

To maintain harmony and resolve disputes within a community.

Definition & Philosophy

Communal justice emphasizes building a culture of harmony and conflict resolution within the survivor community. This environment allows survivors to face their trauma together as a community, heal, and support each other's needs. Communal justice highlights the need for the entire survivor community to be actively involved in the healing process.

Impact on Survivors



Validation and Acknowledgment: In communal justice, the experiences of survivors are acknowledged and validated within the community. The acknowledgment from peers with similar experiences of the harm done to you can be very validating.

Support and Healing: Communal justice provides an environment of support for survivors to heal together as a community. It is a model of community-based care, and for survivors who missed out on that growing up, this can provide immense support and healing.

Prevention and Reform: While communal justice aims to address a specific injury, its long-term goal is to prevent further injury. The lessons learned, and the strength developed within the community through collective healing can contribute to broader systemic reforms that protect against future abuses.

Advocacy and Awareness: The collective effort to amplify survivors' voices about the inherent issues within the TTI will lead to broader awareness. It could even drive systemic reforms that benefit the larger survivor community.

Examples & Ways to Enact

Create or Join Survivor Support Groups:

Form or join support groups that focus on sharing experiences, building mutual support, and coming together to heal collectively. Collectively, they prioritize authentic connections with other survivors in healing interventions and reinforce the structural importance of relationships for the recovery process.



“True justice is a community effort. When we stand together to protect the vulnerable and support one another, we build a society where justice is woven into the very fabric of our lives.”

-Bell Hooks



Participate in Healing/Support Groups:

Participate in supportive groups that focus on collective trauma and can help foster solidarity among community members. Survivors can freely discuss their experiences in a structured, compassionate setting with one another and feel mutually supported in moving forward from collective pain.

Organize Community Events:

Host or participate in events that bring together survivors and community members to discuss both the personal and community impact that the TTI abuse caused to promote healing within the community. These events can include workshops, panel discussions, or memorial services aimed at acknowledging and healing from collective trauma.

Engage in Peer Counseling:

Engage in peer counseling in their communities to process trauma together. This allows survivors to share insights and coping skills that only people who have survived similar experiences can discuss.

Create Online Communities:

Form or join online discussions or social media communities for survivors to share information, resources, and support. These virtual communities can provide a continuous support network, especially for those who may not have access to or are ready for, in-person local survivor groups.

Promote Survivor-Led Initiatives: Support or lead survivor-led initiatives for TTI survivors as part of the community-driven solutions and healing efforts. Examples include initiating advocacy campaigns, supporting the art of survivors, creating public educational materials, or building resource hubs specifically for TTI survivors.

Advocate for Communal Recognition: Push for public expressions that affirm the survivors' collective trauma. Advocating for community recognition can support survivors' efforts to validate their experiences and the public's reflections on the lingering impact of the TTI.

Start/Participate in a Podcast: Create a podcast where survivors of the TTI can share their stories, support one another, and foster a sense of community. Podcasts can create a sense of solidarity, mutual healing, and growth.



Potential Challenges

Not all survivors will feel comfortable participating in communal justice processes, especially if they fear retaliation from their abusers who hear it. Other survivors may just not be at a place in their healing journey where they are ready for this kind of group work and the vulnerability involved, especially since most TTI survivors have various types of group/peer-related trauma from their time in their programs.

Mitigating Challenges

Providing support and structure that ensures group members feel safe and heard is an essential aspect of enabling survivors to participate in communal justice. A structure can involve establishing rules for groups, setting norms for behavior and conflict resolution, and providing de-escalation practices by facilitators trained in trauma-informed approaches. It can also include creating cultures of empathy and understanding where individuals express compassion for one another, knowing that everyone is on their unique healing path and may be at different stages of that journey.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE



Motivation

To ensure fair distribution of financial resources and opportunities.

Definition & Philosophy

Economic justice aims to ensure survivors of the TTI have equal access to economic systems and opportunities to achieve the financial stability they need to rebuild their lives. It focuses on addressing the financial inequalities that can result from the trauma that the TTI caused and empowering survivors to achieve economic independence and security. Unlike distributive justice, which centers on the fair allocation of resources to help survivors recover, economic justice emphasizes long-term empowerment and systemic change, ensuring survivors can actively participate in and benefit from economic systems without ongoing barriers or inequities.

Impact on Survivors

Restitution: Economic justice addresses the financial needs of survivors, providing compensation and resources to help them rebuild their lives.

Support and Healing: Providing survivors with financial assistance contributes towards their healing and opens opportunities for wellness and closure.

Validation and Acknowledgment: Survivors who receive financial support have a tangible acknowledgment of their experiences and the devastating effects that the abuse had on their lives.

Advocacy and Awareness: Advocating for public fundraising campaigns like GoFundMe can raise awareness about the economic hardships faced by survivors because of their time in the TTI.



Examples & Ways to Enact

Pursue Civil Litigation for Financial Compensation: File civil lawsuits against TTI programs or staff who are responsible for their abuse to get financial restitution for damages.

Apply for Scholarships and Educational Grants: Apply for a specific scholarships or grants designed for those harmed by the TTI. If there aren't any, survivors can also lobby for their creation or approach potential donors interested in starting one.

Start or Contribute to Crowdfunding Campaigns: Start or contribute to a crowdfunding campaign like GoFundMe to provide financial resources for essential things like medical bills, therapy costs, legal fees, or tuition.

Create Victim Compensation Funds: Lobby to create or expand victim compensation funds to help survivors whom the TTI harmed. These can assist survivors with unexpected expenses associated with recovery, such as therapy, housing, clothing, and other essentials.

Promote Job Training Programs: Promote, sponsor, or attend job training programs that can teach survivors the necessary tools to secure employment. Programs like vocational training, resume-building, or mentorship foster survivors' ability to become financially independent and significantly better the lives of many survivors.

Fundraise for Advocacy Organizations: Donate to an organization that advocates for TTI survivors or launch a fundraiser via social media or planned events.



"True justice is a community effort. When we stand together to protect the vulnerable and support one another, we build a society where justice is woven into the very fabric of our lives."

-Franklin D. Roosevelt

Connect Affluent Organizations to Survivor Support Efforts: If survivors have ties to affluent organizations or individuals, they can leverage those connections to encourage donations or resources for advocacy efforts. This could involve securing contributions, sponsorships, or partnerships that directly benefit survivors in need.

Utilize Social Media for Financial Campaigns: Leverage your social media presence to promote fundraising efforts through birthday fundraisers or charity drives to raise money for TTI survivors. Sharing links, stories, and campaigns on platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook helps amplify these campaigns' reach and impact.

Potential Challenges

Finding enough funding for support programs can be tricky, and dealing with complicated bureaucracy for financial aid can be frustrating and slow. The lack of awareness about survivors' economic struggles makes it hard to rally public support. Survivors may also encounter stigma and bias when trying to get financial help or find jobs. Legal obstacles can complicate efforts to secure compensation or benefits, especially if access to good legal help is limited. Keeping economic justice programs sustainable over the long term is another hurdle, as is coordinating with various groups and organizations. On top of all this, activists might deal with their own trauma or burnout, which can impact their work. A well-rounded approach that includes advocacy, community involvement, and strategic planning is essential to tackle these challenges.

Mitigating Challenges

Engaging with legal experts who are well-versed in institutional abuse cases and can assist with seeking financial compensation is essential. Teaming up with advocacy organizations can also offer valuable support and resources to help navigate the legal and economic systems that can seem foreign. It will also be important to seek out emotional support through counseling or support groups to help manage any feelings of guilt or shame and affirm their right to seek the compensation they need.



CONCLUSION: CREATING A HOLISTIC SENSE OF JUSTICE

Seeking justice as a survivor of the Troubled Teen Industry is personal and complex. No single form of justice can fully address the harm caused, and often a combination of approaches is needed. Legal action may bring accountability, while social justice or advocacy can provide validation and purpose. Distributive and economic justice can restore financial stability, and restorative or communal justice may offer emotional healing.

Your path to justice may blend these approaches. By choosing actions that resonate with your values, you contribute to both your own healing and the broader fight for accountability and reform in the Troubled Teen Industry. Every step you take matters in protecting future generations.



TAKE ACTION

The checklist below is designed to help survivors identify and explore the various avenues for justice that are available to them. Each type of justice offers a unique way to address trauma, seek redress, and contribute to change.

Take your time when reviewing all the options, and consider what resonates the most with you. You may feel drawn to one or multiple categories, and that's okay. Justice is personal, and this checklist can help you focus on the steps that feel right for your healing journey. Track your progress by checking off the actions that align with your goals.

Remember: this is not a one-size-fits-all approach, and you can choose the actions that bring you closure and empowerment. Take this at your own pace, and if you need to revisit or adjust your goals, that is OK.

AT THE END YOU'LL FIND AN ILLUSTRATION THAT BREAKS DOWN THE TYPES OF JUSTICE AND THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACT ON YOU SO YOU CAN FOCUS ON THE PATHS THAT ALIGN WITH YOUR NEEDS.

SURVIVOR'S CHECKLIST FOR JUSTICE PURSUITS

Retributive Justice

- File a police report about the abuse.
- File criminal complaints against abusers
- Work with prosecutors to seek criminal charges.
- Advocate for sentencing or testify in court.
- Join or initiate a class-action lawsuit.
- Advocate for stricter laws and regulations for TTI programs.
- Participate in victim impact statements during sentencing.
- Support law enforcement efforts by sharing evidence or testimony.
- Campaign for legal reforms in your state.



Restorative Justice

- Participate in survivor-led restorative justice groups.
- Organize or attend community dialogues on TTI abuses.
- Start or contribute to truth-telling projects that share survivor stories.
- Engage in community-based restorative justice projects.
- Attend restorative justice conferences.
- Support or lobby for restorative justice legislation.
- Create or support survivor-led initiatives that incorporate restorative practices.

Distributive Justice

- File civil lawsuits to seek financial compensation.
- Apply for victim compensation funds.
- Advocate for scholarships or economic support programs for survivors.
- Participate in class action settlements.
- Support crowdfunding campaigns for survivors in need.
- Work with legal teams to negotiate settlements or reparations.
- Partner with nonprofits to raise awareness and create economic relief opportunities.

Social Justice

- File civil lawsuits to seek financial compensation.
- Apply for victim compensation funds.
- Advocate for scholarships or economic support programs for survivors.
- Participate in class action settlements.
- Support crowdfunding campaigns for survivors in need.
- Work with legal teams to negotiate settlements or reparations.
- Partner with nonprofits to raise awareness and create economic relief opportunities.

Corrective Justice

- File civil lawsuits for compensation and corrective measures.
- Document physical evidence of abuse (photographs, objects).
- Submit regulatory complaints to trigger investigations.
- Negotiate settlements with TTI institutions.
- Engage in public advocacy for policy changes.
- Support whistleblowers in exposing ongoing abuses.
- Collaborate with regulatory bodies to ensure enforcement.
- Join forces with other survivors for a stronger case.

Procedural Justice

- File formal complaints with regulatory bodies.
- Advocate for trauma-informed legal practices.
- Testify at government public hearings.
- Request case reviews if you believe your case wasn't handled fairly.
- Campaign for transparency in legal processes.
- Engage with legal aid organizations for support.
- Educate other survivors on navigating the legal system.

Communal Justice

- Join or create survivor support groups.
- Participate in healing groups for survivors of TTI abuses.
- Organize or attend community events focused on healing.
- Engage in peer counseling within the survivor community.
- Create or join online support communities for survivors.
- Promote survivor-led initiatives for healing and advocacy.
- Advocate for public recognition of the survivor community's trauma.



Economic Justice

- Pursue civil litigation for financial compensation.
- Apply for scholarships and educational grants.
- Start or contribute to crowdfunding campaigns for survivors.
- Advocate for the creation of victim compensation funds.
- Promote or attend job training programs for survivors.
- Donate to or raise funds for advocacy organizations.
- Connect affluent organizations with survivor support efforts.
- Use social media to promote financial campaigns for survivors.

	VALIDATION + ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ACCOUNTABILITY	RESTITUTION	PREVENTION + REFORM	SUPPORT + HEALING	ADVOCACY + AWARENESS
Retributive Justice	●	●		●	●	●
Restorative Justice	●			●	●	●
Distributive Justice	●		●		●	
Social Justice	●	●		●	●	●
Corrective Justice	●	●	●	●	●	●
Procedural Justice	●	●			●	●
Communal Justice	●			●	●	●
Economic Justice	●		●		●	●

UNSILENCED