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Justice in Auroville --- What's Your Opinion?

1 message

L'aura Joy <laura.joyful@gmail.com>

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To: Restorative Auroville <restorative@auroville.org.in>

Dear Community,

Our "Restorative Auroville" team is exploring the theme of justice in Auroville and how we might develop a justice system that resonates with our values and supports us to move through disputes and conflict with more potential for constructive change.

We would like to know what you think about justice in Auroville, and what works and doesn't work as our community response when justice is needed.

Below is a short questionnaire -- we invite you to take a few moments to contemplate and respond... We also offer some background information to let you know how we are using the term "justice" in this context...

in gratitude,

L'aura, Janet, Shanti, Hélène, Kati



What is Justice?

Justice is a broad multifaceted concept of moral rightness that incorporates varying perspectives on fairness, ethics, rationality, religion and law.

Individuals want to be treated fairly, whether they're in a courtroom, at work, or in line at the cafeteria. We don't want to be judged more harshly because of our gender, age, or racial or cultural background. We each feel we deserve equal and impartial treatment.

Because we have this desire for equality and fairness, the assurance of justice is usually a prerequisite for a healthy society, although of course our human history is littered with examples of treating each other unjustly.

This raises the question of what's to be done when an injustice is committed. When a crime or abuse is committed, we want justice, both for the offender and for the victim. For the offender, justice might mean that crimes don't go unpunished, but also that the punishment fits the crime and context. For a victim, justice might mean seeing that a criminal is put behind bars, or it may be monetary compensation, or something else, with the goal to make the victim feel equal again.

Justice remains a hard topic to pin down because we often disagree over what we deserve and whether we're receiving it. Our sense of justice is influenced by the ethics and values of our culture, each with its own mix of history, mythology and religion. So in such disagreements, we need reasonable and impartial decisions to be made, to the extent that such a thing is possible. And when people feel that they aren't getting their due, society can become unstable.

Forms of Justice

Retributive or punitive justice, which exists in nearly all modern societies, is a theory of justice that considers punishment, if proportionate, to be the best response to crime. When an offender breaks the law, justice requires that they forfeit something in return. The severity of penalty for a misdeed or wrongdoing is meant to be reasonable and proportionate to the severity of the infraction.

Restorative justice is an approach to justice that focuses on the needs of the victims and the offenders, as well as the involved community, instead of solely satisfying legal principles. Victims take an active role in the process, while offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions, "to repair the harm they've done – by apologizing, returning stolen money, doing community service," etc. Restorative justice considers crime and wrongdoing to be an offence against an individual or community, rather than the state. It considers crime as a wound that must be healed, whereas retributive justice is more concerned with legalities.

Source:

1. Wikipedia
2. <http://people.howstuffworks.com/what-is-justice.htm>
3. <https://www.reference.com/government-politics/justice-mean-e62df9a907aae608#>

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I've invited you to fill out a form:

Justice in Auroville --- What's Your Opinion?

Name

Email

Community

1a. Do you think we are able to serve justice adequately in Auroville (ie. restore balance and fairness after it has been disrupted)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

1b. Explain your choice from above.

2a. Do you think we need to explore and improve our justice system (ie. develop and improve fair and effective modalities for restoring balance after a disruption)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

2b. Explain your choice from above.

3. What do you think is our biggest challenge in the field of justice (ie. being able to trust in our community's capacity to restore fairness and balance)?

4. What do you think would be an "ideal" way of responding when a justice challenge emerges? [Select all that apply.]

- ☐ Hear all parties, understand their needs, and look at how best to restore what has been broken or lost on all sides.
- ☐ Have a more efficient "legal and authoritative" process in place, so that an outcome or consequence is decided upon, and can be enforced.
- ☐ Call for a Meeting and allow the Residents to decide on an appropriate outcome.
- ☐ Seek the wisdom of a Council of Elders (or such).
- ☐ Strongly encourage the conflicting parties to find an amicable resolution (through a process like Mediation or Restorative Circle), and if no resolution is found, the dispute goes for arbitration.

☐ Let go of all processes and surrender it to the Divine.

☐ Other:

5. What do we already have in place (systems, groups, values, ideology, practices, etc) that works well and that could support us in developing this ideal response when the need for justice emerges?

6. Any other comments?

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