

# 4 Types of Justice

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## **Distributive Justice**

Distributive justice, also known as *economic/social justice*, is about fairness in what people receive, from goods to attention. Its roots are in social order and it is at the roots of socialism, where equality is a fundamental principle.

If people do not think that they are getting their fair share of something, they will seek first to gain what they believe they deserve. They may well also seek other forms of justice.

## **Procedural Justice**

The principle of fairness is also found in the idea of *fair play* (as opposed to the *fair share* of distributive justice).

If people believe that a fair process was used in deciding what it to be distributed, then they may well accept an imbalance in what they receive in comparison to others. If they see both procedural and distributive injustice, they will likely seek restorative and/or retributive justice.

# **Restorative Justice**

The first thing that the betrayed person may seek from the betrayer is some form of restitution, putting things back as they should be.

The simplest form of restitution is a straightforward apology. Restoration means putting things back as they were, so it may include some act of contrition to demonstrate one is truly sorry. This may include action and even extra payment to the offended party.

Restorative justice is also known as *corrective justice*.

# **Retributive Justice**

Retributive justice works on the principle of punishment, although what constitutes fair and proportional punishment is widely debated. While the intent may be to dissuade the perpetrator or others from future wrongdoing, the reoffending rate of many criminals indicates the limited success of this approach.

Punishment in practice is more about the satisfaction of victims and those who care about them. This strays into the realm of revenge, which can be many times more severe than reparation as the hurt party seeks to make the other person suffer in return. In such cases 'justice' is typically defined emotionally rather than with intent for fairness or prevention.