



[NEWSPAPER](#)

[ABOUT](#)

[CONTACT](#)

# Issue #8

*Features: 'Envisioning a World without Prisons  
and without Violence: New Approaches to*

POWERED BY

**Featured  
Authors**

# Transformative Justice'

2/26/2021 0 Comments

Rachel "Checks" De  
Guzman, *Editor-in-Chief*

Anny Schmidt, *Staff Writer*

Written by Rachel "Checks" De Guzman, *Editor-in-Chief*

On Wednesday, February 24, 2021, at noon, Danielle Sered, the director and founder of Common Justice, and her colleague Kira Shepherd, Common Justice's vice president of organizing and policy, hosted a talk about ending mass incarceration and violence, in which they did not simply share the four principles guiding the organization's responses to violence but also established a set of vocabulary around social and economic disparities that oil the mechanisms of mass incarceration by prioritizing visibility and respect.

Common Justice is an organization that works with survivors to meet their needs. Its efforts are dedicated to the advancement of local and society racial equity through practical approaches to violence.



Common Justice is an organization that strives to meet the needs of survivors, advance racial equity in society and establish practical approaches to violence.

Violence when unaddressed generates and perpetuates mass incarceration which disproportionately targets Black and Brown communities in the United States. Violence suffocates and controls survivors of violence inside a bubble of silence. Violence scars these communities and leaves behind anxiety in the absences of the incarcerated.

Sered and Shepherd alternate the facilitation of the discussion, branching into each of the four points and adding supportive anecdotes and narratives that complexify and contextualize the organization's mission.

## Archives

February 2021

## Categories

All

Features

 [RSS Feed](#)

POWERED BY

ter the program would choose

Common Justice for themselves and their perpetrators when given the choice between its avenues of transformative justice and incarceration. Incarceration extracts and replicates the nurturing qualities of violence: shame, isolation, exposure to violence and inability to meet economic needs.

The collective and direct responses of Common Justice addresses these sources of violence. These are their four guiding principles.

First, survivor-centered approaches reverses the shame that those who experience harm feel.

The organization uses the term survivor rather than victim to precisely underline the more encompassing cause of violence in American society: incarceration, which is a form of state-level harm. A survivor of violence often can carry physical memories of loved ones in their arms, of physical and/or sexual abuse and of state-imposed isolation and neglect. This expanded definition of survivor validates Common Justice members and their experiences.

In other words, each person is reminded of their own dignity.

Second, accountability is upheld. Sered distinguishes the difference between accountability and punishment. Accountability is an active, “act of love,” that mends, and it is a “dignifying” action that “does not force us to make false choices between two dignified people,” Sered says. At Common Justice, accountability means doing what is right as defined by one who was harmed.

Punishment is precisely passive because you don’t run away from it.

The third concept is driven by safety. Shepherd spends ample time, discussing the preventative work that essential and state-funded services do to disrupt cycles of violence. “Why? Why did this person rob this person?” she says.

To put it differently, what does this person lack that motivates or causes such extreme measures to take place? Consider the benefits of a calm mind, a warm meal and a bed to sleep in. Shepherd equates safety with basic skills like parenting, mental health management and resources like community

Violence interrupter programs are underfunded but provide essential services that actively prevent violence to low-income communities, disproportionately to low-income Black and Brown communities. Shepherd says that violence interrupter programs like Common Justice could benefit from just a quarter of the budget that is over-allocated towards police and prison uses.

Life-supporting sources are exacerbated by the lack of equity.

Lastly, responses to violence must be racially equitable. American success is historically defined by the cultivation and protection of one's private property. Many private landowners who were wealthy and white not only practiced policing and surveillance of their land, but also extended the definition of property to tangibly encompass Black people within their ownership as slaves.

Common Justice holds racial equity as an aspirational goal, not necessarily a jurisdictional goal while looking at what is happening. Racial inequity is tied to and exacerbated by other social factors, so to repair or repay or heal the harm done by violence—justified by racial inequity—means to reckon with the death of commitment and to rewire the racial biases that condition all of us who live in America.

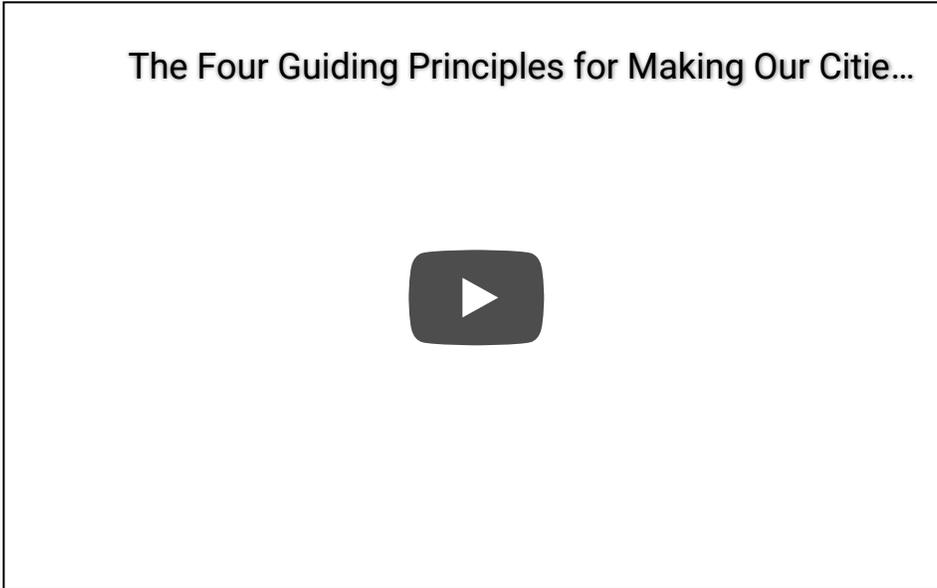
Sered and Shepherd are two women who have found their calling. They have seen the power of education and transformation both inside and outside of academia. The responsibilities of their work necessitates compassion at the center of everything they do to dismantle the monster that is mass incarceration. In addition to the intimate conversations like the ones that I had attended today, they advocate for survivors of mass incarceration through public action and policy.

Those who are not incarcerated, like myself and the campus community of the University of Puget Sound, can support the transformative justice work that Common Justice does by being accountable to each other.

Sered says, "We can owe and be owed at the same time ... Debts don't erase each other, they coexist." The United States has changed in many ways since its beginnings. Sered firmly believes that mass incarceration is seeded in this

America continues to change, and it's hard to keep the record straight about who is indebted to who as time passes, especially if we do not adapt our ways of communication. Debts that sustain generational trauma do not disappear. Instead, silence aggravates the problem and hurts us, as a people, more.

Listen to hear directly from Sered, speaking about these very principles in regards to Common Justice:



*Rachel "Checks" De Guzman, Editor-in-Chief*

*Rachel "Checks" De Guzman writes from Southern California, just north of Los Angeles. She writes satire, book reviews, performance features and op-ed pieces on current events and social media movements. At the University of Puget Sound, you'd find her walking around North End or touring larger Tacoma on public transit.*

*Follow her on Instagram: @r.e.a.d.checks*

Like 0

Tweet

0 Comments

POWERED BY

# Dating During COVID: Pros and Cons

2/26/2021 0 Comments

---

Written by Anny Schmidt, *Staff Writer*

In March of 2020, Covid19 became apparent and restrictions were set in place. Because of these restrictions to stay six feet apart, wear a mask and not meet up with people outside of your household, dating got pretty difficult.

There are many online dating sites that people use today; some of the more popular being Tinder, Bumble, Grindr, Hinge, Her and Clover. These are all popular sites used by students of the University as well. According to a short online poll done on the Facebook Puget Collective page, we asked students what dating site they used most frequently. Thirteen students responded Tinder, six replied Bumble, five said Her, and one said Hinge.



When talking to a student about their choices on what dating sites they chose to use, the student said that they liked Bumble and Hinge. “With Bumble I like that it’s run by a female and there are all female employees. It’s very women based. The woman has to reach out to the guy and it makes me feel more safe. With Hinge I like that they have prompts like ‘My favorite place to get coffee is...’ it takes the pressure off of making a bio.”

The student we spoke to said that they didn’t feel comfortable at first going out on dates, but once we had been in quarantine for a long period of time they felt comfortable trying an in-person date. “We both got tested beforehand and quarantined. We wore masks and went snowshoeing outdoors so it felt safe,” the student said.

The student also talked about how they experienced a Facetime date but didn’t like it as much as an in-person date. “Online it’s hard to read body language and there are less activities to do. In-person it’s more comfortable with the person,” the student said.

POWERED BY

According to The Washington Post<sup>1</sup>, once the pandemic hit, everyone downloaded apps like Hinge, Tinder and Bumble. There has been a surge of students who rushed to get housing with their significant other without even discussing it beforehand. The Washington Post also talked about something called a “Zoom crush.” According to The Washington Post, in an interview they said: “You go to the Canvas page and then you find their name and then you get their Instagram,” as a way of getting in touch with the person you have a crush on, and then asking them out on a study date.

There are pros and cons to dating virtually in the world of today. Some of the cons are the intimacy that humans crave. It’s hard to get intimacy when there’s a rule about staying six feet away from your fellow peers. On the bright side, this new way of dating gives people a chance to try out creative, new ways of being romantic. This can include distanced movie nights, video dates, handwritten letters, online games or even cute care packages. While staying distant isn’t the most fun option, it can give couples a chance to get to know each other without rushing into the intimate side of the relationship.

Long distance relationships have always existed, and with Covid-19 setting in, dating in the virtual world just creates a bunch of long distance relationships. Of course, because of this, relationships have the chance to build up trust, and there are more opportunities for people to open up since they are isolated or lonely.

Despite the vaccine roll out, some people are still uncomfortable with meeting others in-person. Even so, we do see that people are feeling more inclined to date again now that we can see a light at the end of the tunnel.

“I’m more inclined to go out now because people have been in quarantine for so long and you can get a sense of what they’ve been doing.” a student said. “You can ask them questions if they’re being safe. I’m more inclined to talk to people now, but I’m still unsure about meeting people in-person.”

*Anny Schmidt, Staff Writer.*

*Anny Schmidt writes for The Trail.*

Like 0

Tweet

0 Comments

POWERED BY

