

# ***THE NONJUSTICE SYSTEM***

WELCOME TO THE NONJUSTICE SYSTEM.

## Introduction

When people are hurt, mistreated, or neglected (or when somebody they care about is hurt, mistreated, or neglected) they often experience a need or desire for justice—a desire that the wrongdoer “pay for” his or her actions or be punished in some way. Although this is a common feeling, for some people the desire for justice may become so powerful and overwhelming or obsessive that it interferes with other thoughts and productive activities, prevents the wound or trauma from healing, and leads to risky, destructive acts of retribution or even violence, destroying relationships and lives. Some scientific studies suggest that, within the human brain, the desire for justice in the form of revenge is similar to the desire that a drug addict feels for narcotics—a desire that, when gratified, may produce intense sensations of pleasure (a “high”) that might even become addictive. The satisfaction and release that moviegoers and video gamers experience upon seeing the villain finally getting his just desserts hints at the potential power of this feeling. The Nonjustice System is designed to help people overcome and heal the hurts, wrongs, neglects, and traumas of the past and to control the desire for justice in the form of revenge. Combining aspects of law and psychology, it does this by giving victims (or those who care for them) the opportunity to experience getting justice safely, rapidly, and inexpensively, coupled with an opportunity to experience and explore an alternative to seeking justice called “nonjustice,” which means to abstain from seeking justice in the form of revenge.

As such, the Nonjustice System provides those who have been hurt, mistreated, or neglected with a unique forum in which to tell their story and a unique way to experience getting justice against the person(s) who wronged them. During the process, new insight into the desire for justice, the means of controlling it, and the process of self-healing may be revealed.

The Nonjustice System can be used for specific cases and/or as a personal practice and strategy for responding to grievances. There are no time limits or pressures for completing the steps of the Nonjustice System at a certain pace. A straightforward case might be processed in as little as an hour or two. For more complex or deeply traumatic situations, much more time may be needed or desired. The steps also may be revisited and reconsidered over extended periods of time. This all compares to the many months or years typically required for a case to be processed in the traditional justice system, and the high costs of that system, making the Nonjustice System a more expedient and efficient option for resolving conflicts.

## The Nonjustice System Process

The Nonjustice System may be used either individually (by oneself), with a trained guide, in a group, or in any combination of these.

Like the traditional justice system, cases in the Nonjustice System are handled in the following eight steps:

1. The Indictment
2. The Plea
3. The Prosecution
4. The Defense
5. The Verdict
6. The Sentence
7. The Appeal
8. The Punishment

Importantly, unlike the traditional justice system, in the Nonjustice System the person who has been hurt, wronged, or neglected is not limited to playing the role of the victim. Instead, he or she is given the opportunity to imagine playing *all* of the roles of the justice system, including the prosecutor, defendant, defense lawyer, jury, judge, appellate court, and even a witness of punishments.

Also unlike the traditional justice system, the “courtroom” of the Nonjustice System exists entirely within the mind of the person who has been hurt or wronged. This is consistent with the fact that the wrongdoing in question also exists entirely within the mind of the victim—for, by definition, wrongs of the past exist only in the memory and cannot be experienced by the physical senses (although their physical aftereffects may remain). Among the advantages of such a mental “courtroom” are that it can be accessed almost anytime, anywhere, and without cost—no lawyers or judges needed. In addition, the person who has been hurt or wronged controls all aspects of the courtroom, including who is there, who is not, and how the case unfolds.

Another significant way that the Nonjustice System differs from the traditional justice system is by including an additional ninth step called “The Final Judgment.” Borrowed from ancient wisdom traditions, in this step the person who has been hurt or wronged is given the opportunity to weigh the benefits and costs of seeking justice and to consider the alternative of practicing nonjustice. It is during this step that new insight into the desire for justice, the means of controlling it, and the process of self-healing is often revealed (although this can also happen at any step in the process).

How does it work? In each of the nine steps of the Nonjustice System, the injured person is asked to play a role and respond to a series of questions. Responses may be spoken or written. The entire system is contained on the following pages. Nothing else is required.

When you are ready, let’s begin...

**IMPORTANT WARNINGS, LEGAL RELEASES AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK**

**THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY THE USER BEFORE PROCEEDING  
(PROCEEDING WITHOUT SIGNING INDICATES AGREEMENT TO ALL TERMS  
BELOW)**

1. The Nonjustice System is a role-playing exercise during which a victim of wrongdoing is invited through a series of questions to imagine what it might be like to prosecute his or her transgressor(s) in the justice system. During the process, the victim is asked to recall the circumstances and details of the wrong(s) in question. This may cause discomfort or distress and trigger powerful emotions. Although for many people these are familiar discomforts and emotions of remembering traumatic circumstances, please do **NOT** proceed with the Nonjustice System unless you are certain that doing so will not in any way harm you emotionally, mentally, or physically. **If you proceed with the Nonjustice System, then intending to be legally bound you represent and agree that you accept and assume these and all other related risks of using the Nonjustice System and you release the creators, providers and administrators of the Nonjustice System from all legal liability of any form whatsoever arising from or related to your use of the Nonjustice System.**

2. The Nonjustice System invites the victim to imagine what it might be like to witness his or her transgressor(s) being punished for the wrong(s) committed. This is done to create a safe space (within the imagination) in which to experience what it might be like to get justice against a transgressor without placing the victim or the transgressor at risk of actual harm or jeopardy. It is believed that by creating this safe imaginary experience, the desire to seek justice or revenge in the “real world” will be reduced and the risk of violence or negative outcomes will be lessened. If you proceed with the Nonjustice System, then intending to be legally bound you represent and agree to the creators, providers and administrators of the Nonjustice System that you will NOT engage in any conduct, whether by act or omission, that could in any way result in harm to yourself, the transgressor(s), or any other person or entity arising out of or related to your use of the Nonjustice System.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date                      Print Name (user of Nonjustice System)                      Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date                      Print Name (witness of user’s signature)                      Signature

## **STEP ONE**

### **THE INDICTMENT—YOU ARE THE PROSECUTOR**

*Close your eyes and imagine a courtroom.*

*Take note of the judge's bench and the witness stand; the jury box and the lawyers' tables; the viewing gallery and the courtroom doors. Notice the high walls and ceiling; the large windows and floor; the courtroom furnishings and lights; the temperature, sounds, and smells. Notice whether the courtroom is empty or filled with people. If there are people, notice whether you recognize any of them.*

*Imagine now that you are the **PROSECUTOR** in The Nonjustice System. The courtroom has been brought to order and your case has been called. It is a very important case. Serious wrongs have been committed. You are there to ensure that justice is served.*

*Your first job as prosecutor is to charge the defendant(s) with the wrongs, offenses, mistreatments, and neglects committed. The defendant(s) is/are seated at the table with the defense attorney. You are standing, ready to address the court:*

- a. Look at the defendant(s) and repeat the following out loud:

“As the prosecutor in the Nonjustice System, I hereby charge  
\_\_\_\_\_ [insert name of defendant(s)] with committing the  
following wrongs, offenses, mistreatments, and neglects: \_\_\_\_\_  
[list the charge(s) against the defendant(s)].

*Note: A summary of the charges (e.g., physical assault, theft, betrayal, insult/disrespect, unfair treatment, denial of dignity, neglect, indifference, cruelty, callousness, etc.) is sufficient at this stage. You will have the opportunity to go into greater detail at Step Three.*

*Note: Include all of the wrongs, faults, neglects, difficulties, and hurts (both large and small) for which you want the defendant(s) to be held accountable.*

- b. How does it feel to be the prosecutor of the person(s) who harmed you (or somebody you care for)?
- c. As the victim (or somebody who cares for the victim), what are you remembering and feeling as you hear the charge(s) against the defendant(s) spoken aloud in court?

*Proceed to Step 2 (The Plea).*

## **STEP TWO**

### **THE PLEA—YOU ARE THE DEFENDANT**

*Close your eyes again. You are in the courtroom, but now you are the **DEFENDANT(s)** in The Nonjustice System.*

*Imagine sitting at the defense table. You have just heard the prosecutor state the charges against you in open court.*

- a. As the defendant(s), what were you *thinking* as you heard the charge(s) against you?
  - i. Were you remembering what happened? Were you denying that anything happened? Were you thinking you have done a bad thing? Were you thinking that you are innocent?
  - ii. Were you thinking that you have an excuse? Were you thinking that there must be some misunderstanding?
  - iii. Were you thinking that the prosecutor and victim are trying to hurt you? Were you thinking of ways to avoid punishment?
  - iv. Any other thoughts? Or were you thinking nothing at all?
- b. As the defendant(s), what were you *feeling* as you heard the charge(s) against you spoken aloud in court?
  - i. Were you feeling sad, happy, ashamed, proud?
  - ii. Were you feeling hurt, victimized, defiant, resentful?
  - iii. Were you feeling remorseful, apologetic, empathetic?
  - iv. Were you feeling bored, confused, numb?
  - v. Any other feelings? Or were you feeling nothing at all?

*As the defendant(s), you must now enter your plea of “guilty” or “not guilty” to the charge(s) (Note: you do not make a defense until Step Four). You are seated at the defense table. You rise to address the court:*

- a. Do you plead GUILTY or NOT GUILTY to the charges?
- b. As the victim (or somebody who cares for the victim), what are you feeling as you hear the Defendant plead guilty or not guilty?

*Proceed to Step 3 (The Prosecution). Note: Even if the defendant(s) admit(s) guilt at this step, the case in the Nonjustice System continues through all 9 steps because you play all roles.*

### ***STEP THREE***

#### **THE PROSECUTION—YOU ARE THE VICTIM**

*Close your eyes again. You are in the courtroom, sitting in the gallery behind the defense and prosecution tables. You are now the **VICTIM** in The Nonjustice System. The defendant(s) has/have pleaded not guilty and the trial is about to start.*

*Imagine that the prosecutor calls you to take the witness stand. The court clerk asks you to raise your right hand and places you under oath. You gaze about the courtroom, noticing the judge, the jury, the people in the gallery, and the defendant(s). After stating your name for the record, you begin answering the prosecutor's questions about what happened:*

- a. Please state the date, time of day, and location of the event(s) that led to the charges against the defendant(s) in this case?
- b. What was your relationship to the defendant(s), if any, prior to the event(s) in question?
- c. What were you doing immediately prior to the event(s) in question?
- d. What was/were the defendant(s) doing immediately prior to the event(s) in question?
- e. Please now tell the court in detail exactly what happened. (What specific wrongs, offenses, mistreatments, and neglects did the defendant(s) commit?)
- f. What specific injuries did you (and/or persons you care for) suffer as a result of the defendant(s) actions or inactions (including physical, mental, and emotional injuries and trauma, economic injuries, family injuries, employment injuries, pain, suffering, and any other damages)?
- g. Were there any witnesses? (If so, who?)
- h. What did you do immediately after the defendant(s) hurt you?
- i. What did the witnesses (if any) do?
- j. Did you report what happened to anyone? (If so, to whom? What, if anything, did they do?)
- k. Since the event(s) in question, have you spent much time thinking about what happened, the harm you suffered, and the defendant(s)? Please describe how much time and what this has been like for you.
- l. Since the event(s) in question, have you done anything to attempt to make the defendant(s) pay for the wrongs committed or to punish the defendant(s)? Please describe what/how.
- m. Since the event(s) in question, have you done anything to try to reconcile or make peace with the defendant(s)? If so, what? How was this received?
- n. Have the event(s) in question changed your life? If so, how?
- o. What have you been feeling as you've heard this testimony being spoken aloud in court? Has your view of the case, yourself or the defendant changed?

*Proceed to Step 4 (The Defense)*

## **STEP FOUR**

### **THE DEFENSE—YOU ARE THE DEFENDANT**

*Close your eyes again. You are in the courtroom, sitting at the defense table. You are now the **DEFENDANT** in The Nonjustice System. You have just heard the testimony against you.*

*Imagine that your lawyer calls you to come up to the witness stand. The court clerk asks you to raise your right hand and places you under oath. You look at the judge, the prosecutor, the victim, and the people in the gallery. After stating your name for the record, you begin answering the following questions from your lawyer about what happened:*

- a. From your perspective as the defendant(s), what was your relationship to the alleged victim, if any, prior to the event(s) in question?
- b. What were you doing immediately prior to the event(s) in question?
- c. What was the alleged victim doing immediately prior to the event(s) in question?
- d. From your perspective as the defendant, please now tell the court exactly what happened. Did you do anything to harm the alleged victim? If so, what?
- e. If you harmed the victim, was it an accident? Did you do it because you believed that the victim or somebody else (or society in general) had harmed you? Are there any other mitigating circumstances or explanations? If so, what?
- f. Did the alleged victim do anything to cause his or her own injuries? If so, how?
- g. Were there any witnesses? (If so, who?)
- h. What did you do immediately after the event(s) in question?
- i. What did the witnesses (if any) do immediately afterward?
- j. Did you report what happened to anyone? (If so, to whom, and what, if anything, did they do?)
- k. Since the event(s) in question, have you spent much time thinking about what happened and the victim? Please describe how much time and what this has been like for you.
- l. Since the event(s) in question, have you done anything to attempt to make the alleged victim (s) pay for any wrongs committed or to punish the alleged victim? Please describe what/how.
- m. Since the event(s) in question, have you done anything to try to reconcile with or make amends or peace with the alleged victim? If so, what? How was this received?
- n. Please describe how have these event(s) changed your life?
- o. *As the victim (or somebody who cares for the victim), what have you been feeling as you've heard the defendant's testimony being spoken aloud in court? Has your view of the case, yourself or the defendant changed?*

*Proceed to Step 5 (The Verdict)*

## **STEP FIVE**

### **THE VERDICT—YOU ARE THE JURY**

*Close your eyes again. You are in the courtroom, sitting in the jury box. You are now the **JURY** in The Nonjustice System. You have just heard the testimony of the victim and the defendant(s).*

- a. Imagine now that the prosecutor rises to make the final closing arguments, urging you as the jury to find the defendant(s) guilty. What is the strongest and most compelling argument that the prosecutor makes to find the defendant(s) guilty?
- b. Imagine now that the lawyer for the defendant(s) rises to make the final closing arguments, urging you as the jury to find the defendant not guilty. What is the strongest and most compelling argument that the lawyer for the defendant(s) makes to find the defendant(s) not guilty?

*Imagine now that you are in the jury room. You have heard all of the evidence and arguments for the prosecution and the defense. Take a moment to consider everything you've heard. What evidence is most significant or important to you? Are the facts clear, or are there doubts and ambiguities? Is the defendant(s) guilt clear? Are there mitigating circumstances? What are you thinking about as you weigh the defendant(s) guilt or innocence?*

*When you have reached a verdict in your mind, imagine now that you are back in the courtroom. The time has come for you as the jury to render your verdict. The judge has asked the defendant(s) to rise. Look at the defendant and repeat the following out loud:*

“We, the jury in the Nonjustice System, hereby find \_\_\_\_\_ [insert name of defendant(s)] GUILTY or NOT GUILTY [choose one for each charge]?”

- a. As the jury, how does it feel to sit in judgment of the defendant(s)?
- b. As the victim (or somebody who cares for the victim), how does it feel to hear the verdict spoken aloud in court? Has your view of the case, yourself or the defendant(s) changed?

*If you have found the defendant(s) GUILTY of any charge, proceed to Step Six (the Sentence).*

*If you have found the defendant(s) NOT GUILTY of all charges, your dispute has been resolved and you may exit The Nonjustice System. Before exiting the system: What changed your mind about the defendant(s) guilt? How do you feel about ending the dispute at this point? Is there anything you need to do or not do to move forward with your life? And remember, you can always return at any point because the Court of Nonjustice is within you.*

Proceed to Step 6 (The Sentence)



## STEP SIX

### THE SENTENCE—YOU ARE THE JUDGE

*Close your eyes again. You are in the courtroom, sitting at the judge's bench. You are now the **JUDGE** in *The Nonjustice System*.*

*The jury has just found the defendant(s) guilty. Your role as the judge is to sentence the defendant(s) to be punished.*

- a. Imagine now that the prosecutor rises and asks you as the judge to sentence the defendant(s) to the maximum (harshes) punishment(s). What specific punishment(s) does the prosecutor seek, and what is the prosecutor's strongest and most compelling argument for imposing it/them? *Note: there can be one or more punishments for each charge, and they can be anything you choose.*
- b. Imagine now that the lawyer for the defendant(s) rises and asks you as the judge to spare the defendant(s) or impose only the lightest possible sentence. What is the strongest and most compelling argument that the lawyer for the defendant(s) makes?

*You have heard all of the arguments for the maximum and minimum sentence. As the judge in the *Nonjustice System*, you may impose any sentence you choose, or no sentence at all. Take a moment to consider what you've heard. What factors are most important to you in deciding upon an appropriate punishment? What do you want to accomplish with a punishment? Is the choice of punishment clear? What are you thinking about as you do this? How are you feeling?*

*When you have reached a decision, imagine now that you ask defendant(s) to rise and face you. Look at the defendant and repeat the following out loud:*

“[Insert name of defendant(s)] \_\_\_\_\_, I hereby sentence you to \_\_\_\_\_ [insert the punishment(s)].”

- a. Be very specific in describing the punishment(s). What exactly must the defendant(s) do, not do, suffer or experience? When must it begin? Where? How long must it last? Is there a possibility for parole or reducing the sentence? Under what circumstances?
- b. As the judge, how does it feel to sentence the defendant(s) to be punished?
- c. As the victim (or somebody who cares for the victim) how does it feel to hear the defendant(s) being sentenced in court? Has your view of the case, yourself or the defendant(s) changed?

*Proceed to Step 7 (The Appeal).*

## **STEP SEVEN**

### **THE APPEAL—YOU ARE THE APPELLATE COURT**

*You have successfully tried, convicted, and sentenced the person who wronged you. But the defendant(s) has filed an appeal, asking that your verdict and sentence be reviewed one last time before the punishment is administered.*

*Close your eyes again. Imagine now that you are the **APPELLATE COURT** in *The Nonjustice System*. Your role as the appellate court is to review the verdict and sentence against the defendant(s). Consider again the verdict and the sentence:*

- a. Is the verdict (guilty or not guilty) correct?
- b. Is the sentence appropriate for the wrongs committed?
- c. Based upon your answers to the above two questions, is it your decision that the verdict and sentence be **AFFIRMED**, **MODIFIED**, or **OVERTURNED**?
- d. As the victim (or somebody who cares for the victim) how does it feel to hear the appellate court's decision? Has your view of the case, yourself or the defendant(s) changed?

*If you AFFIRMED the verdict and sentence, proceed to Step 8 (the Punishment).*

*If you MODIFIED the verdict or sentence in any way, either repeat Step 6 (the Sentence) or proceed to Step 8 (the Punishment) as you feel is most appropriate for the case.*

*If you have OVERTURNED the verdict and the sentence in their entirety, then the dispute has been resolved and you may exit The Nonjustice System. Before exiting the system: What changed your mind about the defendant(s) guilt or the sentence? How do you feel about ending the dispute at this point? Is there anything you need to do or not do to move forward with your life? And remember, you can always return at any point because the Court of Nonjustice is within you.*

## **STEP EIGHT**

### **THE PUNISHMENT—YOU ARE A WITNESS OF PUNISHMENTS**

*All appellate rights have been exhausted and the verdict and sentence against the defendant(s) has/have been made final. The punishment must be administered without further delay.*

*Close your eyes again. Imagine now that you are a **WITNESS OF PUNISHMENTS** in The Nonjustice System. Your role is to observe the sentence being carried out. **Note that you are only an observer from a distance. As in the justice system itself, you are NOT involved in the actual administration, imposition, or enforcement of punishments. This is performed by others as appropriate for the sentence (e.g., a sheriff seizing a bank account; a guard or warden in a prison).** However, unlike the justice system, in the Nonjustice system the punishment(s) must be carried out in your presence. Imagine now observing the initiation of the punishment(s):*

- a. Where are you? What does it look like? What does it smell like? What is the temperature, and what are the sounds? Where is/are the defendant(s)? What is/are the defendant(s) doing? Are other people present? Who are they? What are they doing?
- b. The punishment(s) begin(s). Who is administering or imposing the punishment? What does he/she look like? What is he/she saying and doing? What is/are the defendant(s) doing? What is/are the defendant(s) saying? What expression is on the defendant(s) face as the punishment is administered? What do you think that the defendant(s) is/are feeling and thinking? Is/are the defendant(s) suffering? Struggling? Fighting/retaliating? Taunting/laughing? Crying? Apologetic? Pleading for mercy/forgiveness? Other actions/emotions?
- c. As a Witness of Punishments, what is this like for you? What are you thinking and feeling? Are you enjoying yourself? Excited? Bored? Annoyed? Happy? Unhappy? Suffering? Struggling? Taunting/laughing? Crying? Remorseful? Joyful? Vengeful? Merciful? Other actions/emotions? Is observing the punishment(s) benefitting or harming you? How?
- d. How long does/do the punishment(s) continue? Does/do the punishment(s) change over time? Describe what happens until the punishment(s) end(s)? As appropriate, answer questions (b)-(e) above for each stage, phase, type, or segment of the punishment(s), or if the punishment(s) change over time.
- e. As the punishment(s) continue, do you ever wish for it/them to stop? Increase/decrease in severity? Why?

*The punishment(s) is/are now over. Proceed to Step 9 (The Final Judgment).*

## **STEP NINE**

### **THE FINAL JUDGMENT—YOU ARE THE JUDGE**

*You have safely and successfully prosecuted the person(s) who wronged you and experienced getting justice. The person(s) who wronged you was/were found guilty and punished. Few cases in the traditional justice system are handled so quickly and produce an outcome that so closely fulfills the wishes and expectations of the victim.*

*Before moving on with the last step, let's take a moment to explore what the process has been like for you so far:*

- a. Did prosecuting the defendant(s) in the Nonjustice System cause you to experience any emotions or gain any insights that surprised you?
- b. Did prosecuting the defendant(s) make you feel in any way uncomfortable? (Please explain.)
- c. Did prosecuting the defendant(s) in any way delight you? Exhilarate you? Depress you? Frighten you? (Please explain.)
- d. Are there any aspects of prosecuting the defendant(s) that you particularly enjoyed? Disliked? (Please explain.)
- e. Most importantly, now that you have prosecuted the defendant(s) and experienced getting justice in the ways you have hoped and imagined, do you feel satisfied with the outcome? In other words, do you feel that you can move on with your life productively and in peace, free from the need or desire for more justice against the person(s) who wronged you? Put another way, do you feel that your grievances have been resolved? Or, do your grievances remain unresolved?

*If your grievances remain unresolved, this is very common and exactly why this Final Step in the Nonjustice System exists. Please proceed to "The Trial of Justice" below.*

*If you feel that your grievances have been fully resolved, you may/might still benefit significantly from proceeding to "The Trial of Justice" below, but you may also exit the Nonjustice System at this time if you wish. You can always return at any time, because the Court of Nonjustice is within you.*

#### *The Trial of Justice*

*Close your eyes again. Imagine now that you are the **Judge at the Final Judgment** in the Nonjustice System. But your role is not to determine the guilt, innocence, or appropriate punishment of the person(s) who wronged you. That has already been accomplished, and justice has already been served. **Your role during the Final Judgment is to sit in judgment of justice itself.***

*The idea of putting justice on trial may sound odd or startling to you, but consider the dilemma with which you are presently faced: How can it possibly be that, after prosecuting and punishing the person(s) who wronged you, and after getting justice in exactly the way you hoped and imagined, your grievances still remain unresolved? Could it be that justice itself is the problem—that justice is not capable of resolving grievances or enabling people to move on with their lives in peace?*

*Your first instinct might be to answer that your grievances remain unresolved because the prosecution and punishment of the person(s) who wronged you have taken place only in your mind and imagination, not the real world. But consider this:*

*Where do your grievances really exist?*

*Can you point to your grievances themselves and see, touch, hear, smell, or taste them? Can you show them to others (or can you only show their physical effects, such as a wound, a lost or broken relationship, or a depleted bank account)? Can any wrongful act that happened in the past ever be examined with the physical senses in the “real” world? Therefore, are grievances themselves anything more than powerful memories and feelings in the mind of having been injured at some time in the past? Likewise, consider this:*

*Where does justice really exist?*

*Can you point to justice and see, touch, hear, smell, or taste it? Can you show it to others (or can you only show its physical effects)? Therefore, is justice anything more than a powerful desire or need for retribution or payback in the mind of someone who has been injured in the past? How can satisfying such a desire or need through actions in the “real” world possibly resolve a grievance that exists only in the mind and memory?*

*These can be difficult and confusing concepts. Let’s set them aside for now and consider another possibility: What if it could be proven very directly that the reason your grievances remain unresolved is that justice is not capable of resolving grievances or enabling people to move on with their lives in peace? As the **Judge at the Final Judgment**, you can place justice itself on trial right now by answering the following questions:*

- a. At Step 1 above, when you as the prosecutor and victim were asked to indict the defendant(s) and to include in the list of charges “all of the wrongs, faults, neglects, difficulties, and hurts (both large and small) for which you want the defendant(s) to be held accountable,” did this process cause you to remember and relive the wrongs committed by the defendant(s)? (Yes or no.)
- b. At Step 2 above, when you as the victim heard the defendant(s) plead guilty or not guilty to the charge(s), did this cause you to think about and remember the defendant(s) guilt in harming you? (Yes or no.)
- c. At Step 3 above, you as the victim were required to testify against the defendant and asked to state all of the details of the wrong(s) committed against you, including: the date, time of day, and location; the specific wrongs, offenses, mistreatments, and neglects committed by the defendant(s); and the specific

- injuries you suffered. Did this cause you to think about, remember, and relive in detail what the defendant(s) did to hurt you? (Yes or no.)
- d. At Step 4 above, when you as the victim were required to listen to the defendant's(s) side of the case, did this cause you to think about, remember, and relive what the defendant(s) did to hurt you? (Yes or no.)
  - e. At Step 5 above, when you as the victim were required to listen the jury's verdict, did this cause you to think about and remember the defendant(s) guilt in harming you? (Yes or no.)
  - f. At Step 6 above, when you as the victim were required to consider how the defendant(s) should be punished, did this cause you to think about and imagine punishing the defendant(s) for hurting you? (Yes or no.)
  - g. At Step 7 above, when you as the victim were required to hear the defendant's(s) appeal of the verdict and sentence, did this cause you to think about and relive what the defendant(s) did to harm you and to imagine again how the defendant(s) would be punished? (Yes or no.)
  - h. At Step 8 above, when you as a Witness of Punishments were required to observe the defendant(s) being punished, this cause you in any way to experience being punished yourself? (Yes or no.)

### The Verdict On Justice

*If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, then:*

*Did the process of seeking justice itself result in the commission of the same wrongs against you as those committed by the person(s) who harmed you in the first place (because you might/may have been forced to relive those wrongs)?*

*Did the process itself also punish you for those wrongs, even though you were the victim (because you might/may have been forced to observe and participate in the punishments)?*

*Can justice resolve grievances or heal past wounds if the process itself re-harms, punishes, and re-victimizes the victim?*

*The verdict on justice may become even clearer by considering the following questions:*

Throughout history, have most people found guilty of committing terrible acts and atrocities not believed that were fully justified in doing so in the name of justice, because they believed that they were victims first? For example, have not most terrorist acts been committed by people seeking justice in response to past grievances (whether illegitimate or illegitimate)? Have not most acts of torture, genocide, and warfare been waged by people and nations seeking justice to avenge past wrongs? Are not most workplace, domestic violence, and street shootings reported in the media the result of somebody seeking justice over something (have been terminated, divorced, disenfranchised, disrespected, etc.)? With a long history such as this, could it be that the pursuit of justice

is a primary cause of cause of human suffering in this world? And if seeking justice can become an addiction, could it be that it is the cruelest addiction of all?

### Nonjustice

*If justice is not capable of resolving grievances, healing wounds, or restoring peace and happiness, what process is available that can accomplish these things? Would it be a process that, at a minimum, helps victims end the self-destructive process of seeking justice? Would it be the opposite of justice? Something called, perhaps, “nonjustice”?*

Nonjustice means to abstain from pursuing justice in the form of revenge. It acknowledges that seeking justice is the cause of human suffering, not the cure, and that the first step in resolving grievances and healing the wounds of the past is to stop seeking justice and making those grievances and wounds worse. In other words, nonjustice is a determined, affirmative act of self-preservation taken by, and entirely for the benefit of, the victim (not the perpetrator) to break the cycle of justice-seeking.

*What might it be like to practice nonjustice? Close your eyes again. You are still the **Judge at the Final Judgment** in the Nonjustice System.*

- a. Imagine that, for this moment only, you no longer need to seek justice against the person(s) who wronged you. How would you feel? No more battles or struggles with your enemy. No more trials. No more dwelling upon the wrong(s) committed against you. No more obligations to punish or make your enemy “pay” for anything. No more chasing and being chased. No more plotting and scheming. No more risking further retaliation. It is over. Finally, at last, over.

Would you feel relieved, like a heavy burden had been lifted?

Would you feel liberated?

Would you feel joyful?

Would your thoughts turn to other, more pleasant things?

Would you have time to do other, more productive things?

Would you feel able to move on with your life in peace?

Can you think of any ways in which the wrong that the person committed against you led to *positive* consequences for you (for example: becoming aware of personal strengths you did not realize you had; a relationship that became better or stronger as a result; becoming stronger or wiser as a person; beneficial opportunities or life situations)?

- b. Now imagine that you have decided you want to pursue justice again against the person(s) who wronged you again. The battles and struggles against your enemy resume. The trial looms. You must dwell upon and relive the wrong(s) of the past again. You must punish or make your enemy pay. You are chasing again and being chased. You are back to plotting and scheming. You are back to risking further retaliation. There is no end in sight.

Would you feel burdened and oppressed?

Would you trapped and imprisoned?

Would you feel miserable and depressed?

Would your thoughts turn to dark things?

Would you have less time to do other, more productive, things?

Would feel unable to move on with your life in peace?

*Is it becoming clear that you are more powerful than you might have imagined? Is it becoming clear that only you (not your enemy) have the power to end your own suffering and restore your peace and happiness. In other words, is it becoming clear that:*

***You are not only the Judge at the Final Judgment, but you are also the one who is on trial?  
And that only you can set yourself free.***

#### One vs. Infinity

*You might still feel reluctant to end your pursuit of justice against the person(s) who wronged you because you believe that this/these person(s) should restore to you what has been taken from you, particularly in the form of money or property. You might even be willing to trade your peace, happiness, and freedom to get it. But before you continue on your quest for justice, consider this:*

*Whether your enemy is an individual, a large corporation, or the government, he, she, or it is miniscule in size to the world and the universe around you. The world and the universe create and sustain vast and untold amounts of riches of every conceivable form known to mankind. If you insist that only the person(s) or entity that wronged you can and must give you what you want (in other words, if you insist that only the person(s) or entity that wronged you can make you happy again), then you are insisting that the remainder of the world and the universe not do its part in sustaining you. You are demanding that your needs be met and that your happiness come from a very limited and unreliable source that has already proven to have betrayed you. In the process, you are rejecting a source as large as infinity itself that, if you turn to it instead and leave your grievance behind, could give you all that you seek and much, much more.*



*Think very carefully before you would trade your peace, happiness, and infinity itself for the small pittance of a grievance with a single person or entity.*

### ***THE FINAL VERDICT***

*The Nonjustice System has now come to an end. What is your verdict?*

*Will you have mercy on yourself and set yourself free?*

*Is your pursuit of justice ENDED or will it CONTINUE?*