

Restorative Practices

An Effect Approach to Changing Behavioral Responses in Children and Adults

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Definition-

- Restorative practices is a social science that studies how to build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making.

- The use of restorative practices helps to:
 - Reduce crime, violence and bullying
 - Improve human behavior
 - Strengthen civil society
 - Provide effective leadership
 - **Restore relationships**
 - **Repair harm**

Restorative Justice vs. Restorative Practices

Restorative justice is reactive, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs.

Restorative practices also includes the use of informal and formal processes that preceded wrongdoing, those that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing

Social Capital is defined as the connections among individuals and the trust, mutual understanding, shared values and behaviors that bind us together and make cooperative action possible.

Restorative Justice provides tertiary prevention introduced after the problem has occurred, with the intention of avoiding reoccurrence.

Restorative practices expands that effort with primary prevention, introduced before the problem occurred.

Restorative Practices in Education

In education circles and groups provide opportunities for students to share their feelings, build relationships and solve problems and when there is wrongdoing, to play an active role in addressing the wrong and making things right (Riestenberg 2002).

History

Restorative practices has its roots in restorative justice, a way of looking at criminal justice that emphasizes repairing the harm done to people and relationships rather than only punishing offenders.

Eventually modern restorative justice broadened to include communities of care as well, with victim's and offender's families and friends participating in collaborative processes called conferences and circles.

- Family group conference started in New Zealand in 1989
- In North America it was renamed family group decision making (FGDM)
- In 1991 the FGC was adapted by an Australian police officer as a community policing strategy to divert young people from court.
- In 1994, Marg Thorsborne, an Australian educator, was the first to use a restorative conference in a school.

Social Discipline Window

This describes four basic approaches to maintaining social norms and behavioral boundaries. The four are represented as different combinations of high or low control and high or low support.

The restorative domain combines both high control and high support and is characterized by doing things *with* people, rather than to them or *for* them.

The social discipline window also defines restorative practices as a leadership model for parents in families, teacher in classrooms, and administrators and managers in organizations.

Supporting Framework

High Control	To Punitive Authoritarian	With Restorative Authoritative
Low Control	Not Neglectful Irresponsible	For Permissive paternalistic
	Low Support	High Support

The fundamental unifying hypothesis of restorative practices is that "human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them for for them.

Reliance on punishment as a social regulator is problematic because it shames and stigmatizes wrongdoers, pushes them into a negative societal subculture and fails to change their behavior.

The restorative approach on the other hand, reintegrates wrongdoers back into their community and reduces the likelihood that they will reoffend.

Nine Affects

The most critical function of restorative practices is restoring and building relationships.

The informal and formal restorative processes foster the expression of affect or emotion, they also foster emotional bonds.

Because informal and formal restorative processes foster the expression of affect or emotion, they also foster emotional bonds.

Restorative practices such as conferences and circles provide a safe environment for people to express and exchange emotion.

Shame

Tomkins defines shame as occurring any time that our experience of the positive affects is interrupted.

Nathanson developed the Compass of Shame-

Withdrawal- isolating oneself, running and hiding

Attack-Self - self put-down, masochism

Avoidance- denial, abusing drugs, distraction through thrill seeking

Attack Others- turning the tables, lashing out verbally or physically, blaming others

Nathanson says that the attachment other response to shame is responsible for the proliferation of violence in modern life.

Restorative Practices, by their very nature, provide an opportunity for us to express our shame, along with other emotions, and in doing so reduce their intensity.

In restorative conferences, for example, people routinely move from negative affects through the neutral affect to positive affects

Fair Process

The central idea of fair process is that individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems- whether they themselves win or lose by those systems- when fair process is observed.

Three Principles of Fair Process

Engagement- involving individuals in decisions that affect them by listening to their views and genuinely taking their opinions into account

Explanation- explaining the reasoning behind a decision to everyone who has been involved or who is affected by it.

Expectation clarity- making sure that everyone clearly understands a decision and what is expected of them in the future.

Restorative Processes

Restorative Conferences

A structured meeting between offenders, victims and the communities in which they deal with the consequences of the wrongdoing and decide how best to repair the harm.

Conferencing is a straightforward problem-solving method that demonstrates how citizens can resolve their own problems with provided with a constructive forum to do so.

Conferences provide victims and other others an opportunity to confront the offender, express their feelings, ask questions, and have a say in the outcome.

Offenders hear firsthand how their behavior has affected people. Offenders may choose to participate in a conference and begin to repair the harm they have caused by apologizing, making amends and agreeing to financial restitution or personal or community service.

Facilitator

A facilitator keeps the conference focused but is not an active participant. In a conference the facilitator provides an opportunity to each participant to speak, beginning with asking open-ended and affective restorative questions of the offender.

The facilitator then asks victims and friends questions that provide an opportunity to tell about the incident from their perspective and how it affected them.

Offenders are Asked the Following Questions

- What Happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time?
- What have you thought about since the incident?
- Who do you think has been affected by your actions?
- How have they been affected?

Victims are asked these Questions-

- What was your reaction at the time of the incident?
- How do you feel about what happened?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- How did your family and friends react when they heard about the incident?

Finally the victim is asked what he or she would like to be the outcome of the conference.

The response is discussed with the offender and everyone else at the conference. When an agreement is reached a simple contract is written and signed.

Conferences can be employed by schools in response to truancy, disciplinary incidents, including violence, or as a prevention strategy in the form of role-plays of conferences with primary and secondary school students.

Circles

A circle is a versatile restorative practice that can be used proactively, to develop relationships and build community or reactively, to respond to wrongdoing, conflicts and problems.

Circles give people an opportunity to speak and listen to one another in an atmosphere of safety, decorum and equality.

Circle time and morning meetings have been widely used in primary and elementary schools for many years and more recently in secondary schools and higher education.

Circles may use sequential format. One person speaks at a time, and the opportunity to speak moves in one direction around the circle.

Each person must wait to speak until his or her turn and no one may interrupt.

A talking piece may be used to facilitate this process. Only the person who is holding the talking piece has the right to speak.

A sequential circle is structured around questions raised by the circle facilitator. No back and forth arguing is allowed.

The sequential circle encourages people to listen more and talk less.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWQSX97tgwk>

Non-sequential Circles

More freely structured than a sequential circle

Conversation may proceed from one person to another without a fixed order.

Problem solving circles may simply be focused around an issue that is to be solved but allow anyone to speak.

One person in the group may record the group's ideas or decisions.

Informal Restorative Practices

Informal restorative practices include affective statements, which communicate people's feelings as well as affective questions, which cause people to reflect on how their behavior has affected others.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfiGiA2bpoY>

A teacher in a classroom might employ an affective statement when a student has misbehaved, letting the student know how you have been affected by the behavior:

When you disrupt the class, I feel sad or disrespected, or disappointed.

Hearing this, the student learns how his or her behavior is affecting others.

Affective Question

The teacher may ask an affective question, perhaps adapting one of the restorative questions used in the conference script-

Who do you think has been affected by what you just did?

And then follow up with "How do you think they've been affected?"

The student has the opportunity to think about his or her behavior, make amends, and change his behavior in the future.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RwlhUcSGqgs&t=7s>