



# *Restorative Practices in Schools*

## **Parent Booklet**

**Restorative Practices have been developed with one specific goal in mind; to support and facilitate the building of healthy relationships. It has been proven beyond doubt that when individuals live in healthy and life giving relationships with significant others, there is abundant personal growth, capacity for character building and a high level achievement in all areas of endeavour.**

**Basic to the Restorative Practices process are the Restorative Questions I & II. These questions form a basis for our interaction, especially when things go wrong in relationships. Try the Restorative Questions next time you are confronted with an issue where someone has caused harm to another. Note what happens.**

**We see Restorative Practices as assisting us to enact our core values in the school.**

**Our hope is that our shared vision will assist us to repair harm and build healthier relationships and that this will in turn help our children to be more resilient and better connected to significant others in their world.**

Principal

## Two Approaches to Justice

### Adversarial (Blame)

- Focus is in the past
- Preoccupied with blame
- Deterrence linked to punishment

### Restorative (Relational)

- Focus in past, present & future
- Emphasis on resulting harm
- Deterrence linked to relationships and personal accountability

***‘For punishment and sanctions to be effective (in changing behaviours) they need to be delivered in a context that provides both meaning and relevance.’***

*There is always tension in relationships.*

*The two approaches illustrated above both seek to address inappropriate behaviour. Which form of thinking do you think restore a natural sense of justice and has the capacity to ‘make things right’?*

*A punitive thought pattern is based on the belief that; ‘the more you punish people for inappropriate behaviour, the less likely they are to do it again.’*

*A Restorative approach states; ‘the stronger the relationship, the less likely we are to act inappropriately toward one another.’*

*Consequences are a part of any response to inappropriate behaviour. In the blame culture, the response is given or ‘imposed’, whereas the relational approach ensures that consequences are given in a context that has meaning and relevance for all concerned. This response is far more likely to foster empathy and therefore a change in behaviour.*

### TIME OUT

Think of a time when someone has blamed you when you have made a mistake.

Then reflect upon a time when someone has responded in a restorative manner.

What effect did each response have on you?

Think of a recent occasion when you could have acted in a more restorative manner with your child.

What can you do differently when a similar occasion occurs in the future?

What do you want your child to learn from you?

## Fair Process

*Justice and fairness provide the foundation upon which healthy relationships are built.*

*The central theme of fair process is that:*

***‘individuals are most likely to trust and co-operate freely with systems - whether they themselves win or lose by those systems - when fair process is observed.’***

## The Three Components of FAIR PROCESS

# 1

### LISTEN

Involving each person by asking for their input so they can tell their story.

# 2

### SPEAK

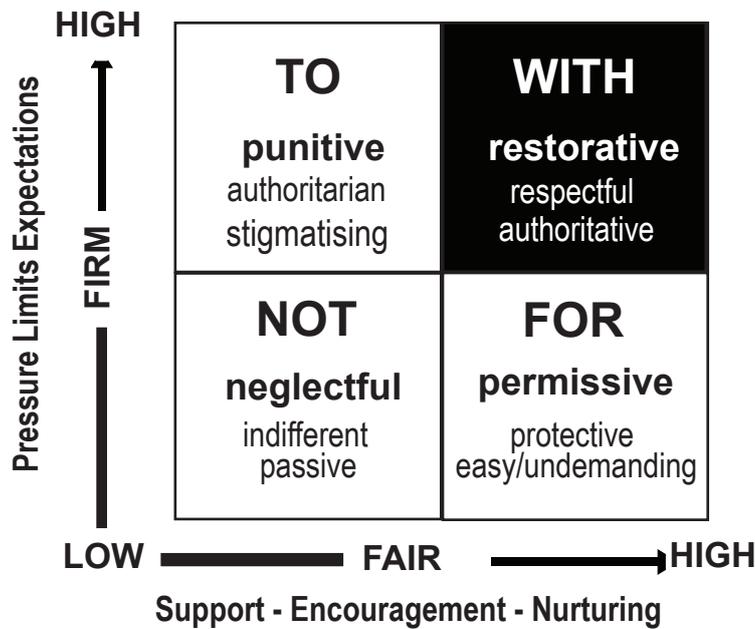
Everyone involved and affected should be able to discuss why final decisions are made as they are.

# 3

### UNDERSTAND

Once decisions are made, new rules are clearly stated, so that everyone understands what is expected.

# Parenting Styles



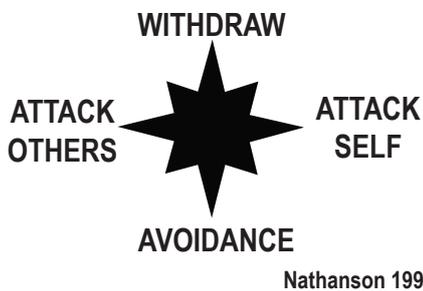
*When we are high on rules and low on respect or support, we will operate as a bully and act as an authoritarian and punitive person who does things **TO** others.  
When we are low on firmness yet high on fairness, we will become permissive and do things **FOR** others.  
When we are neither fair nor firm, we are **NOT** involved with others.  
When we have high expectations and offer appropriate support we are inclusive and operate **WITH** others.*

Adapted from *Social Discipline Window*  
Paul McCold & Ted Wachtel - 2000

## TIME OUT

What has influenced your parenting style?  
How would you describe this style?  
What changes do you need to make to operate more consistently in the WITH domain?  
Is it possible to be respectful, yet still do things 'TO' or 'FOR'?

# Compass of Shame



*The Compass of Shame was developed by Professor Donald Nathanson to describe the various negative ways people respond to shame. This is a very useful tool to use in understanding human behaviour. Think about a person who escalates from mild anger to rage in no time at all. Be assured that their struggle has a lot to do with shame.  
Understanding the Compass of Shame will help you deal more effectively with people who exhibit problematic behaviour.  
Polar responses to shame for children & adults include:*

### POLAR RESPONSES

- Withdrawal:** *When we do not want to talk with anyone.*
- Hurt Self:** *When we tell ourselves we are no good at anything and do not like ourselves.*
- Avoidance:** *When we deny that anything happened.  
When we do distracting things.*
- Hurt Others:** *When we get angry or blame/hurt others.  
When we bully others.*

**What happens when a parent gets a call from the school principal with the news that his/her child has done something inappropriate? A mother who recently attended a training session wrote:**

*“When I get the dreaded call from the principal...  
I have to go to my room, away from everybody! [WITHDRAWAL]  
Then I go to the fridge looking for chocolate to feel okay! [AVOIDANCE]  
Then I think, that school is always picking on my kid! [ATTACK OTHERS]  
By the time I have arrived at the school, I feel like I’m a really bad parent! [ATTACK SELF]  
I realise however that when I go to defend my kid, it is all about how I deal with my painful emotions, and has little to do with my kid’s behaviour!”*

## Restorative Questions I

**What happened?**

**What were you thinking of at the time?**

**What have you thought about since?**

**Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?**

**What do you think you need to do to make things right?**

**What will you do differently next time?**

*These questions are about story, challenge, reflection and reparation of harm. They have been designed to build a strong relational basis with which to work in any relationship.*

*The structure of the questions focus on the **past** (what happened?), **present** (reflection on who has been affected and in what way) and **future** (what needs to be done to make things right?).*

*The questions therefore focus on harm and relationship.*

*They are also:*

- *devoid of blame*
- *respectful and not value laden*
- *thinking questions rather than feeling ones which ironically tend to evoke better feeling responses*
- *have the potential to stimulate empathy and growth.*

*Avoid asking the **WHY** question (why did you do that?)*

## Restorative Questions II

**What did you think when you realised what had happened?**

**What impact has this incident had on you and others?**

**What has been the hardest thing for you?**

**What do you think needs to happen to make things right?**

*The Restorative Questions II offers voice for people who have been harmed by the actions of another. The questions ask for a factual and non-judgemental response. With a focus on the impact of an action or incident, the person who has been harmed speaks to his/her most authentic audience i.e. the person who has caused the harm.*

*The outcome is that responsibility for reparation is laid appropriately upon the shoulders of the person who has caused the harm.*

**When challenging behaviour, why would these questions be helpful?**

**How could you use these questions in your own relationships, both personally and professionally?**

## Basic Agreements for Circles

**Every person freely:**

- 1. acknowledges her/his part.**
- 2. take turns to speak**
- 3. answers all questions clearly**
- 4. does not speak about another person**
- 5. is respectful at all times.**

*Each person shares on how he/she has been affected by an action or incident.*

**Circles provide:**

- *a place of safety*
- *a sense of equality*
- *a physical environment where all can be seen and heard.*

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