

WHAT IS RESTORATIVE JUSTICE?

Definitions collected for use with Compassionate Comprehension with the Common Core
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- * "Restoring relationships and repairing harm"

Dr. Candice C. Carter

- * "When harm has been done, making things as right as possible."

Dr. Ron Claassen

- * Three Basic Restorative Questions

What is the harm that was done?

How can that harm be repaired?

Who is responsible for this repair?

from a PowerPoint by Dr. Joe Fulcher

- * "Restorative Justice is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible."

Howard Zehr, 2002

* What is Restorative Justice?

It is an inclusive process motivated primarily by a need to address harm.

Restorative Justice brings *people responsible* for harm, *impacted parties*, and *community members* together in a face-to-face dialogue to address the harm and provide a space to build trust, hold community members accountable, and start the healing process.

from PowerPoint by Justine Darling

* "Restorative Justice is... holding offenders directly **accountable** to the people they have violated, and providing a range of opportunities for **dialogue**, **negotiation** and **problem-solving**, which can lead to a greater sense of **community safety**, **social harmony** and **peace** for all concerned."

(Emphasis by LKW)

Mark Umbreit, 1996

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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE--- DEFINITIONS:

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* "When harm has been done, making things as right as possible."

Ron Claassen, Founder and Former Director - Victim/Offender Reconciliation Program
Co-Director - Center for Peacemaking and Conflict Studies, Fresno Pacific University

* **What is Restorative Justice?** (from PowerPoint by Justine Darling)

It is an inclusive process motivated primarily by a need to address **harm**. Restorative Justice brings *people responsible* for harm, *impacted parties*, and *community members* together in a face-to-face dialogue to address the harm and provide a space to build trust, hold community members accountable, and start the healing process.

The following definitions are taken from a presentation by Dr. Joe Fulcher, Chief Student Services Officer, to the SDUSD School Board on 7-29-1):

* p. 16 "**Restorative Justice** is a process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible." (Howard Zehr, 2002)

* "**Restorative Justice** is... holding offenders directly accountable to the people they have violated, and providing a range of opportunities for dialogue, negotiation and problem-solving, which can lead to a greater sense of community safety, social harmony and peace for all concerned." (Mark Umbreit, 1996)

* **p. 17 Three Basic Restorative Questions**

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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:

MORE DEFINITIONS, EXPLANATIONS, AND EXAMPLES:

RJ Suggestions by Denise DeGeorge:

- * RJ is done within a community of care
- * Remind students that the victim has input.
- * A student may be able to go to the offender and assertively state their case.
- * There are times when a group of students need to communicate with one student. That student should have a supporter.
- * In an RJ conference, the victim is invited to have a supporter present (could be another child, or an adult)
- * The resolution needs to include a plan for the future (e.g., "The next time you feel that way...")
- * Consider options for if something is ruined.
- * Responsive Classroom/ Humane Classroom: "apology of action"
- * "Clean up your messes!" (and that included relationship challenges, too!)
- * If you've humiliated/ hurt/ embarrassed someone, an option might be to "take it back" in a public way.
- * Consider asking the victim if an apology is wanted... ask offender if they're willing to give an apology.
- * Have students brainstorm and then practice/ role-play what to say to a bully.
- * Care must be taken that a follow-up interaction between victim and offender not result in re-victimization; an adult may need to be there to "stick up for" the victim, especially if there is a definite power differential.

Questions that students might include in their answers to the prompt "What would you do?":

(The following questions are by Justine Darling)

Questions for Person Responsible: (previous phrase re-worded by LKW)

What happened?

What were you thinking about at the time?

Who was affected by what you did?

What was the impact of your actions?

What needs to happen to make things right?

Questions for Impacted Person: (previous phrase re-worded by LKW)

What happened?

What were your thoughts at the time and since?

How has this affected you and others?

What has been the hardest part for you?

What do you think needs to happen next?

A FEW POSSIBLE FORMATS FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:

* Compassionate communication between the two persons involved, covering the questions above.

* A facilitated conversation, wherein the two persons involved are assisted by another person (often, an adult, but perhaps a caring peer, who perhaps has had some training or perhaps just a willingness to help)

* A Restorative Circle, wherein the community (classroom, parents, community members, depending upon the situation) is involved in healing the hurt and making things as right as possible

Please note: Coach students to realize that, when describing what they would do, "ask for help from an adult, with a restorative solution" is a perfectly good answer; however, ask them to think it through and be as specific as possible as they envision restorative scenario for the situation in the text. If no adults on campus are trained in Restorative Justice (or, if the teacher is trained, but not available, due to classroom demands), brainstorm as many options as exist in their own school. Or, students could be given license to "create a perfect world" in which a trained RJ facilitator would be available at any time!

Also from Dr. Fulcher's presentation, p. 4:

(Dr. Joe Fulcher, Chief Student Services Officer, to the SDUSD School Board on 7-29-1):

9 aspects of Restorative (not numbered in the original- LKW)

1 * Misbehavior defined as harm (emotional/mental/ physical) done to one person/ group by another.

2 * Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to address problems in the future.

3 * Dialogue and negotiation, with everyone involved in the communication and cooperation with each other.

4 * Restitution as a means of restoring both parties, the goal being reconciliation and acknowledging responsibility for choices.

5 * Attention to relationships and achievement of a mutually desired outcome.

6 * Conflict/ wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflicts with opportunity for learning.

7 * Focus on repair of social injury/ damage.

8 * School community involved in facilitating restoration; those affected taken into consideration; empowerment.

9 * Accountability defined as understanding impact of actions, taking responsibility for choices, and suggesting ways to repair harm.