

Restorative Practices

Restorative Conferences

Reflection Sheet: Educator

Use the following to think about and/or discuss the video, "Restorative Conferences."

- 1. Restorative Conference trainer Joseph McCarthy opens by saying, "Listening is an act of love." How do restorative practices support this statement? What does this statement mean to you as a teacher?

- 2. Joe says that Restorative Conferences are built on a series of prescribed questions that provide a "template" to help schools address issues between people, i.e., students, teachers, parents, and any pairing thereof. How helpful would it be to have a template of this kind?

- 3. One teacher reads a chart aloud:

Restorative Circles	Restorative Conferences
Circles are used in situations of harm doing when there is a less clear cut distinction between those doing the harm and those on the receiving end of the harm.	Conferences are used in situations where there is a clear person or persons who have inflicted the harm and a clear person or persons on the receiving end of the harm.

Why is it important to understand these distinctions when talking about Restorative Practices? Where and when do you see the value in both of these practices? Give specific examples from your classroom experience.

4. In the film we observe teachers role-playing the parties in a Restorative Conference. Joe mentioned early in the film that the questions are identical for the person who was harmed and the person who inflicted the harm. Why is this practice important?

5. During the role-play sessions participants play the roles of facilitator and students or parents while others in the training group observe. Why is it valuable to role play formal conferencing? What value is there in having colleagues observe each other in a role-play? What norms need to be established in the training group for this process to work effectively?

6. Several teachers offer testimony for the value of training in restorative conferencing, saying it reduces suspension and increases attendance and that anyone who wants to “help young minds grow and feel confident in themselves” should take the training. What is your reaction to these statements?

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Action Plan: Educator

Consider the following to begin the process of implementing elements of the Restorative Conferencing program in your own classroom.

- 1. What elements of the Restorative Conferencing program described in the video do you already do with students in your classroom?

- 2. How do you currently handle those challenging moments when it is clear a specific person or persons have inflicted harm? What supports do you have in your school to help you and the students?

- 3. What is one new idea that you took away from the video about Restorative Conferencing with students? Can you implement that strategy in your classroom? What barriers might exist that would prohibit you from using this technique in your classroom?

- 4. If all staff members at your school cannot be trained in Restorative Conferencing, who do you think are some of the key players that should get trained first? How might those who do receive the training disseminate the information they acquire?
