

*19th IIRP World Conference*

*Restorative Works: Share. Teach. Engage.*

*“The Best Is Yet To Come – Unlocking Restorative Practice’s True Potential”*

*Terry O’Connell*

## *Establishing Expectations*

- *Why have you come to this workshop?*
- *When did you first become interested in restorative justice/practice?*
- *In what way has restorative justice/practice influenced you professionally or personally?*
- *What are your challenges around restorative justice/practice?*
- *What would you like to take from today's experience?*

## Overview

- *The limitations of most restorative practice – Workshop Aim: unlock its true potential.*
- *Defining restorative justice/practice.*
- *Importance of Relationships*
- *End Game – what we are trying to achieve*
- *Working Assumptions*
- *Explicit Practice – connecting theory to practice*
- *Restorative Engagement Practice Template*
- *Case Studies*

## *Limitations of Most Restorative Practice*

- *Restricted around definitional issues.*
- *Lacks rigor, coherence and congruence.*
- *Not explicit*
- *Seen as an alternate*
- *Strong behavioral focus*
- *Mostly viewed in isolation to existing practice*
- *Often discussed as part of the ‘wrong’ conversation*
- *Fails to realize its potential to challenge other practice*

*This workshop aims to address each of the above issues so that Restorative Justice/Practice’s true potential can be realized.*

## *Definition*

- *How do you define restorative justice/practice?*
- *If your definition has changed over time what has influenced those changes?*
- *What are the key words you believe are essential in any definition of restorative justice/practice?*

## *Selected Definitions*

*“Restorative practice is an innate human orientation with biological, psychological and spiritual components which combine to form the necessary backdrop from which we can more effectively relate, communicate and ultimately survive as a species.”*

*“Restorative Practice is a way of thinking and being, focused on creating safe spaces for real conversations that deepen relationship and create stronger, more connected communities.”*

*“Restorative Justice is a process which seeks to restore and strengthen relationships, repair harm, and contribute to the collective wisdom in ways which build community.”*

## *What Success Looks Like*

*“Always start with the end in mind” What does this mean?*

*If what your involvement proved helpful what would be happening for those you are assisting?*

*“The end game is about achieving an authentic connection occurring between people who understand that despite their vulnerabilities they are worthy of loving and belonging.”*

*‘The client is better able to ‘make sense’ of what is happening through telling their story and this can lead to them feeling more empowered.’*

## *What Research Says Makes A Difference*

- Client/professional relationship.*
- Respect, fairness and empathy identified as key elements of a good professional relationships.*

*“Relationships lie at the heart of meeting basic human needs and allowing us to be at our most healthy and thus to flourish. The spectrum of restorative processes and approaches help to address those needs when they are not being met and to provide a safe environment in which to express emotion and repair any damage done to relationships including our own feelings of self-worth.”*

*“It is such a fascinating fact that the relationship between client and professional is far and away more important in so many cases than the actual professional practice. This fact would just about make you say, I don’t need to learn this, I just need to learn how to build relationships! Well, isn’t it nice that on some very fundamental level, that is what restorative practices is all about?”*

## *Working Assumptions*

*What are assumptions?*

*Why is there a need to have a clear set of working assumptions with anything you do?*

*What working assumptions influence how you practice restoratively?*

*“An assumption is a belief of what we assume to be true in the future. We make assumptions based on our knowledge, experience or the available information. These are anticipated events or circumstances that are expected to happen.”*

## *Working Assumptions*

*My 'working' assumptions are that:*

- 1. Relationships are what help us as social beings to derive our identity and meaning.*
- 2. Regardless of the model, practice or theory used there is a strong 'consensus' that an ideal outcome would be for an individual or a group to know how to experience 'right' relationships.*
- 3. Practice focus needs to be on creating those conditions that help establish and build relationships.*
- 4. The practice that reflects the conditions prescribed by Silvan Tomkins for emotional and psychology wellness [strong relationships] is likely to do best at achieving this outcome.*

## *Defining Good Practice*

*The practice would need to be:*

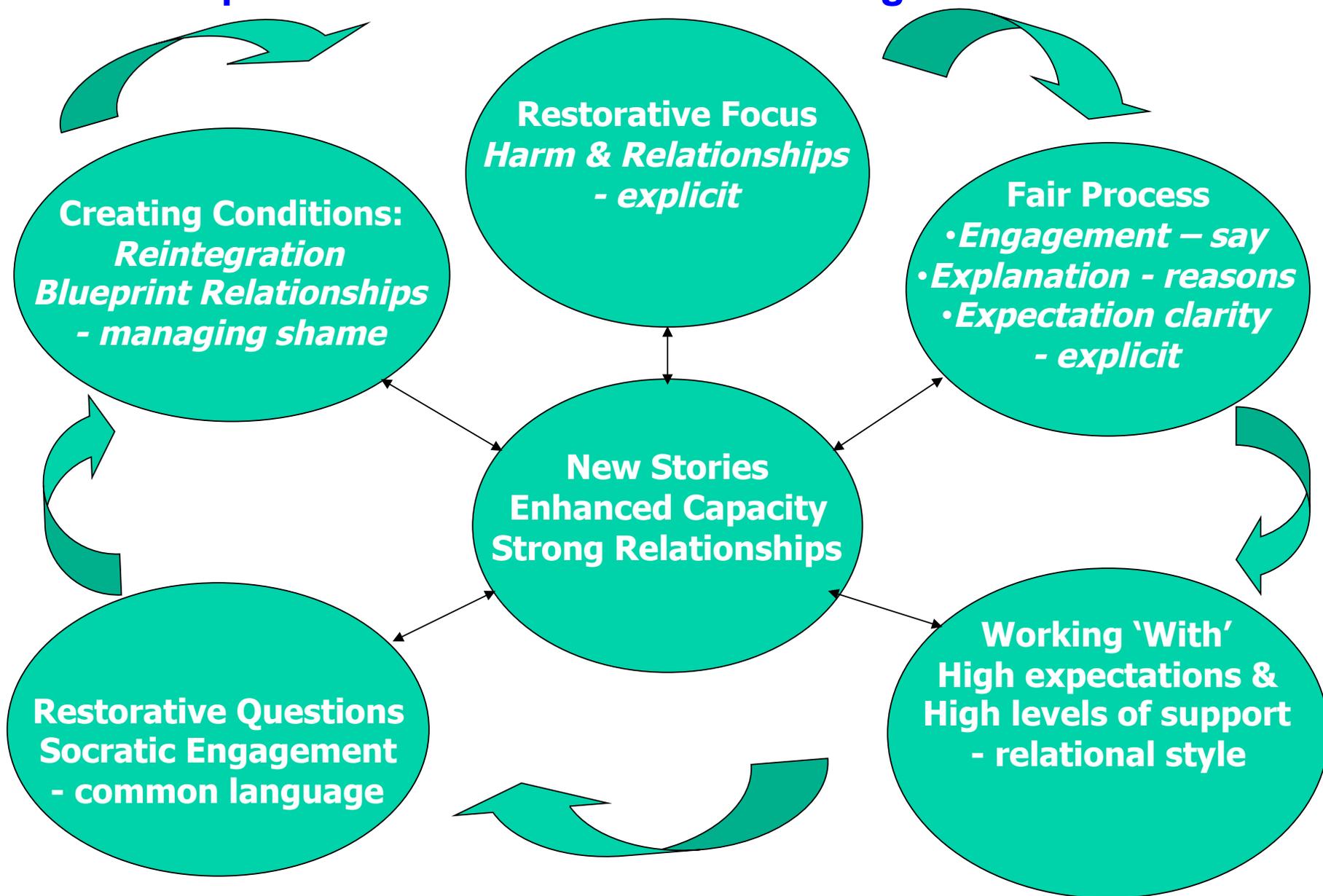
- *explicit - clear rationale about its philosophy, assumptions and theoretical influences.*
- *able to describe its [potential] outcomes.*
- *capable of delivering on these outcomes.*
- *easily explained and shared with those being assisted.*

## *Restorative Practitioner*

*“A restorative practitioner is someone who is able to facilitate the dialogue that helps build capacity and:*

- is capable of assisting others to make sense and meaning of their lives,*
- helps them to identify what is most important in all that is happening,*
- identifies what needs to change and what their part will be in this change process,*
- importantly, what is needed to build and sustain healthy relationships.”*

## Explicit Restorative Framework - Right Conversation



## *Psychology of Affects*

### *Tomkins' Blueprint :*

- *We are 'wired' to want to increase positive affect, and;*
- *Decrease negative affect;*
- *We live best when we can accomplish these two goals;*
- *Anything that increases our power to do this favours life.*

***Nathanson 1992***

## *Nathanson's Community Blueprint*

*Relationships are best built when we:*

- 1. Share and reduce negative emotions (best achieved by listening and acknowledging)*
- 2. Share and promote positive emotions (achieved by affirming)*
- 3. Encouraging the expression of emotions as a way of experiencing 1 & 2.*
- 4. Doing more of 1, 2 and 3 (essential for building and maintaining good relationships).*

## *Restorative Engagement Practice Template*

- *What matters most in our lives?*
- *What do those experiencing conflict have most in common?*
- *Divide these into ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ categories. Identify the main causal factors.*
- *Start with the ‘end in mind’ - describe what would be happening if your intervention/involvement proved helpful.*
- *What makes the greatest difference in terms of profession practice ?*
- *Develop a set of practice assumptions then identify the practice capable of delivering these outcomes - Restorative Practice framework*
- *Initial conversation - What is keeping this person out of relationships and to what extent does the person understand this?*
- *Explicitly engage and respectfully challenge [explain and share your practice] using a ‘Socratic’ engagement style.*

*Nathanson 1992*

## *Case Studies*

- *Restorative Probation Officer.*
- *Restorative Organisation – Re-engage Youth Services*
- *Whole School Change*

## *Thoughts/Comments*

- *What did you take from the workshop?*
- *What did you find interesting?*
- *What will you change in how you practice as a result of today?*
- *To what extent did today's experience help you discover a new dimension or different potential for Restorative Justice/Practice's?*