

Using Restorative Practices to Resolve Conflicts

Moderator

BRADY SMITH, Principal Co-Director,
The James Baldwin School
A NYC Outward Bound School

Speakers

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Using Restorative Practices to Resolve Conflicts



- This workshop will review the use of in-class techniques, restorative circles, agreements and fairness committees to repair harm and hold students accountable when disruption, disrespect and violent altercations occur.

Healing and Transforming Schools Through Restorative Justice



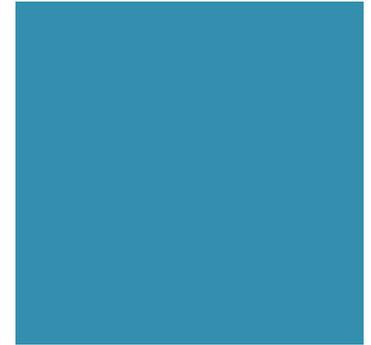
Tania Romero, LMSW
Bilingual School Social Worker, Healer, Youth Organizer

History & Trajectory Of Our Work

- Student racial conflicts at The Flushing International High School (FIHS).
- Examining our work with young people and looking at data (who gets suspended the most, highest drop out rates, violence still occurring).
- Moving away from zero-tolerance into positive behavior and more humane and just approaches that support young people to reflect, heal, grow, and stay in school.
- Supporting young people not just academically but also socio-emotionally (moving into a more holistic/healing approach).
- Creating our school's Community Principles:

12 Principles: Collaboration, Peace and Justice, Self-expression, Academic Excellence and Learning, Love and Belonging, Holism, Respect, Caring for our Environment, Honoring Diversity, Community Building, Leadership, Creativity.

- Building staff buy-in through staff participation and training (with administrative support).
- Building student buy-in and leadership through student participation and training
- Parental involvement.



Providing Holistic/Anti-Oppressive Socio-Emotional Support in Schools

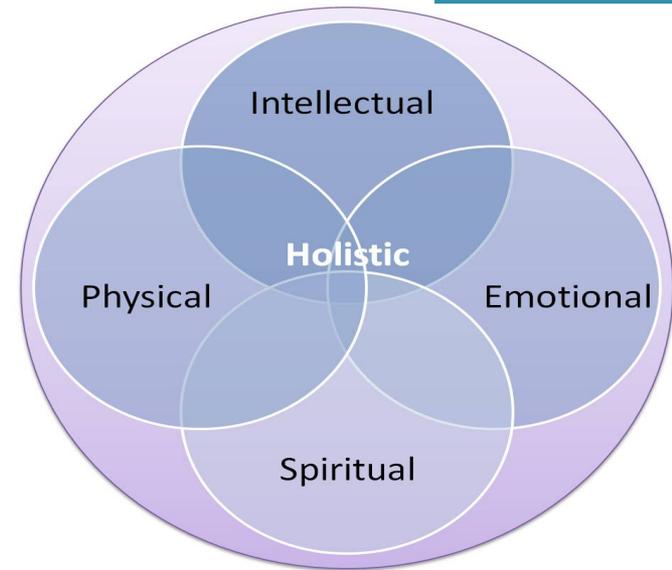
- Students are seen as “whole” human beings, made up of mind-body-spirit. The connection between the mind, body and spirit is intrinsic their personal growth, healing and liberation.
- Creating supportive, safe and nurturing learning environments, particularly for students of color/recent immigrant students means to create and implement systems inside schools that not only acknowledge but work towards dismantling oppressive systems and dynamics that students of color are subjected too through racism, classism, heterosexism and sexism in society.
- Restorative Approaches present us with a model to be able to do this work with students, family and educators.



Treating Young People as “Whole” Human Beings

■ Restorative Justice to:

- ✓ Promote youth leadership and voice.
- ✓ Create safe spaces for young people to heal from trauma and losses.
- ✓ Support young people deal with conflicts in peaceful ways.
- ✓ Support young people academically.
- ✓ Promote deeper connection with self and others
- ✓ Promote mindfulness (through quiet time, breathing, writing, and meditation).
- ✓ Promote self-awareness and self-reflection.



Anti-Oppression Work with Staff

- Staff PDs on:
 - ✓ Cultural competency: Issues of bias and “isms”/becoming culturally competent educators.
 - ✓ Examining strategies/best practices: Restorative Justice, becoming a trauma informed school community, other socio-emotional issues impacting the lives of recent immigrant students/students of color.
- Working closely with teachers to create supports for students: Generating ideas/actions plans, and examining best practices together with teachers (team approach).
- Staff Circles to examine and talk about issues of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, immigration, etc., and how these impact students of color.
- Dismantling oppressive and hierarchical discipline approaches and replacing this with a “Community Accountability and Support” model.
- Circle practice as a “horizontal” practice (breaking the hierarchies and power dynamics).



Restorative Approaches at FIHS

■ Circle Processes

- ✓ The routine of regular dialogue in a circle allows students to practice developing empathy, listening, encouraging participation and inclusion of each individual.
- ✓ The Circle Process is a story-telling process. Every person has a story, and every story has a lesson to offer. In the Circle, people touch each other's lives by sharing stories that have meaning to them.
- ✓ Circles create a positive school and classroom climate, help resolve behavior problems while restoring the damage caused by wrongful behavior. Circles can also support students who are struggling academically, socially and/or emotionally
- ✓ Community Circles, Support Circles, Reintegration Circle, Meditation Circle, Talk Circle, Healing Circle, Acknowledgement or Celebration Circle, Classroom Circles.
- ✓ Anyone in our school can request a Circle for him/herself or others in need.



Restorative Approaches at FIHS

Cont....

■ Fairness Committees (FCs)

- ✓ A FC is a formal meeting of students and adults to hear the concerns of any community member who feels that a Community Principle has been violated.
- ✓ The Committee inspires self-reflection by confronting a member of the community with his or her actions and how they affected others. The group decides how to repair the community after actions have violated its principles, and how to reintegrate the member of the community who has committed the violation back into the culture of the school.
- ✓ A FC is democratic and includes teachers and students. It may also include parents.
- ✓ A FC can be called by any member of the school community, and anyone can be taken to Fairness when a FIHS Community
- ✓ FC supporters (teachers or students) are chosen randomly.
- ✓ There are certain violations that may require other disciplinary actions in addition to a FC.



Restorative Approaches at FIH

Cont....

■ Mediation

- ✓ A Mediation is used to help resolve conflicts, fights and/or misunderstandings between members of our school community.
- ✓ A Mediation includes a trained facilitator and the people who are in need of resolving their differences. The intention is to support those who are involved in the conflict to engage in a peaceful and respectful dialogue about what happened.
- ✓ A Mediation gives the opportunity for the harmer (s) to take responsibility for their wrongful behavior. At the same time, a Mediation gives the opportunity for the harmed to express how the wrongful behavior affected them and what they need to make things right.
- ✓ Those involved in the conflict will commit to taking concrete actions to ensure mutual respect in their classes, hallways and school as a whole.



The Impact of RJ @ FIHS/ Our Success Stories

- 1st FC at FIHS
- Deepening relationships (students-teachers, students-administrators, students-parents, parents-school staff, among staff)
- Lower suspension and detention rates
- Youth Circle Keepers (student leadership)
- Alumni returning to participate in FCs and Circles.

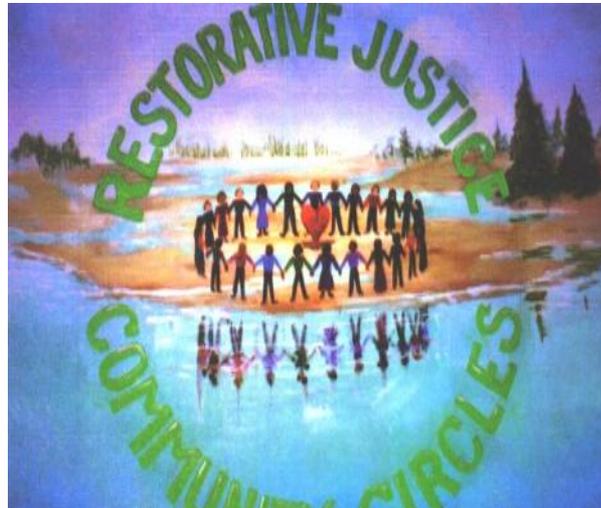


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Using Restorative Practices to Resolve Conflicts in School Communities



Sarah Camiscoli
ESL Teacher, Bronx Academy of Letters
Organizing Council Member, Teachers Unite
Founder, Director, IntegrateNYC4me

What are Restorative Practices to me?

“Repairing harm with all stakeholders”

Tier 1 – Building community and sharing

Tier 2- Restoring community and justice

Tier 3- Reintegrating into the community



How do I look to restore justice as a teacher and an organizer?

Repairing harm in the school community...

- Tier #1-Building class-wide agreements on what is an infraction, how they can be measured, and what can be done to restore them
- Tier #2- Facilitating student leadership to intervene; providing space for group conferencing; creating community alternatives to referrals and suspensions
- ***Tier #3- When students are in fact suspended, what is done to re-integrate them back into the classroom*



Repairing harm in the school system at large...

- Tier #1- Circle meetings where students communicate the ways that they feel our school/the school system is and is not meeting their needs and build understanding around those issues
- Tier #2- Facilitating student leadership to take on those issues by engaging with the DOE, political leaders, and advocacy groups
- ***Tier #3- working with those people to re-integrate people, resources, and innovation back into school communities*

INTEGRATE

NYC4ME

Restoring Justice in the School Community

1. Context

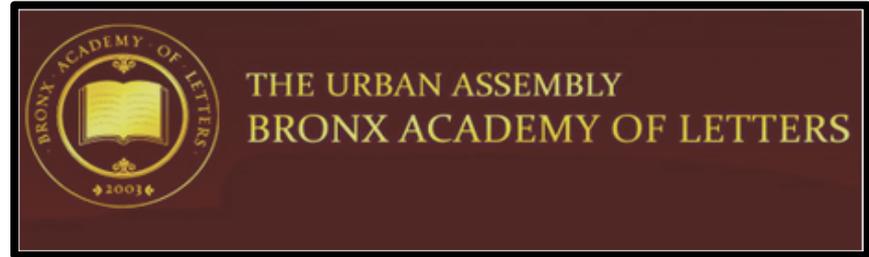
- Small 6-12 public school in Mott Haven, South Bronx
- 98% Black and Latino students
- Wonderful faculty and staff
- Teachers Unite building around RJ
- High suspensions numbers

2. Support

- Other teachers doing RJ @ my school
- **Membership with Teachers Unite

3. Tool

- Curriculum tool- course syllabus introduced with circle on agreements
- Students decide on severity of infractions, point deductions, select “teams”
- Student team “captains” record points, infractions, request conferences



Tier 1 Community Building Tool: Course Syllabus with Agreements

Team
Leader



Unit: Our Community
Week # 1
Worksheet # _____

Our Community Agreements

I. Team Responsibility: Each team will be responsible for the success of its members. The better each of your teammates do, the better you will do as a concept of team comes from the ways that successful businesses, schools, and sports are created. Success happens when the group works hard together, not just when one individual reaches their own goal and works on their own. Every week a **team facilitator** will be elected. The team facilitator will be in charge of keeping track of participation, team goals, bathroom passes and conferences. If a team member receives a referral or is failing, the team facilitator is in charge of scheduling a **conference** with Ms. C to solve the issue at hand. **Team facilitators** will earn _____ points on their weekly exam. A **winning team** will earn _____ points for Friday's exam.



II. Respect and Appreciation -Respect and appreciation are key. They are what allow classroom and places where people can grow. If respect is not held within the room, it is not possible for people to be as powerfully as they can. In this room, there will be _____ warnings given for breaking respect before a detention is given or the student is asked to step out from the room. After two detentions are given, a referral will be issued. Team facilitators can conference with Ms. C to think about community service actions their team members can do to take referrals off.

III. Attendance -Attendance is second to respect. Attendance includes being in class and being on time. Missing class and being late mean that your team loses points. To keep to this agreement, there will only be four bathroom passes given per team a week. Cutting class without a pass will be an automatic referral. Students must have a pass if they are late in order to avoid detention.

IV. Grading
I. Weekly Classwork Grade: 50% II. Weekly [Test Prep] Quiz Grade: 10%
III. Monthly Portfolio + Presentation Grade: 20% IV. Team Record: 10%

V. Everyone in this room is powerful, important, and part of our community even if they may not always seem that way. If you or someone else forgets how powerful and important they are, remind them.

Your Signature _____
Ms. C's Signature _____

Point
System
(student
voted)



Community
Contract



“Everyone in this room is powerful, important, and part of a community, even if they may not always seem that way. If you or someone forgets how powerful and important they are, remind them.”

Tier 1-2 Community Accountability Tool: Collaborative Group Record

Weekly
Team
Leader

Record
Keeping for
Teammates

This Week's Team Captain is...
Yesna



Team Captain
"Guide or leader"
*** 5 points on weekly exam**

- To keep records of participation
- To support group in keeping to classroom agreements
- To brainstorm/schedule supports or interventions for

Game Day Test Record

Name	Goal	Reached?
<u>Yesna</u>	90 %	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Neftaly</u>	90 %	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<u>Nathaly</u>	90 %	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Aisha</u>	90 %	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
_____	90 %	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Participation Record

Name	M	T	W	R	F
<u>Yesna</u>	///	/5	XII	//	/5
<u>Neftaly</u>	/5	/5	/5	//	/5
<u>Nathaly</u>	/5	/5	///	////	/5
<u>Aisha</u>	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5
_____	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5

Total (4) ✓ (2) -1 (6) (8) (15)

Grand Total = (35)

Bathroom Passes

- Date 3/17/15
Time Out _____
Time Back _____
- Date 3/19/15
Time Out 9:11
Time Back 9:18
- Date _____
Time Out _____
Time Back _____
- Date _____
Time Out _____
Time Back _____

Conference Request

We would like to request an afterschool conference for _____
Because _____

Explanation
of Leader
Role

Conference
Request

This captain's story: "disrupting educational process," "failure to be in one's assigned place."
*As a leader- constant participation and engagement, perfect work completion, constant intervening to support teammates; always taking on extra credit;
if your classroom culture itself doesn't create leadership roles where students can constantly restore their infractions and support others, they may become the very thing they are defined by on their records, by their parents, and friends* Just yesterday- "She's giving you a chance, just do it. Stop."

Restoring Justice in our School System

1. Context

- Small 6-12 public school in Mott Haven, South Bronx
- 98% Black and Latino students
- Wonderful faculty and staff
- Students often unhappy with multiple structural elements of school→ space allocation, lunch quality, learning conditions, course offerings

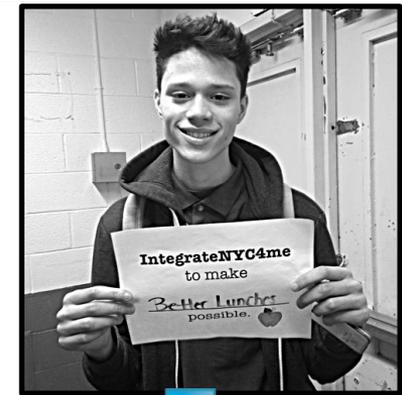
2. Support

- Advisory Time
- Our administrator

3. Tool

- Creation of IntegrateNYC4me
- Teacher facilitated, student-lead avenue to voice concerns/discontents with school system
- Students are able to identify what about their schools they find to be an infraction upon their constitutional rights, injustice
- Key to letting students know that they are able to call out the systems that are meant to support them and restore what they feel like has been lost or broken
- *Story→ Timothy, free lunch, “how am I supposed to show up to school and focus when I know I won’t get a decent meal?” Felt it was an injustice, example of poor allocation of resources because students are “from the Bronx”; after speaking at city council, he was approached by multiple media sources, advocacy groups, and the DOE who agreed to work with our school to address his concerns.

INTEGRATE NYC4ME



The screenshot shows a news article from DNAinfo. The headline is "Bronx Students Go Hungry Rather Than Eat 'Unappetizing' School Lunch". The byline is "By Amy Zimmer | February 10, 2015 7:25am". The article text reads: "MOTT HAVEN — Partially defrosted pizza, still-cold taco meat and other school lunch items are so unappetizing that sophomore Timothy Martinez sometimes doesn't even feel like showing up for class at the Bronx Academy of Letters." There is a photo of a school lunch tray with pizza, taco meat, and carrots. The article also includes social media sharing icons and a sidebar with a sign-up form for "Get our daily South and alert" and a link to "More School Food".

Restoring Justice in our School System



#NYCLetEmPlay



Restorative Practices: What can we do?

Tier 1 – Building community and sharing

- Train teachers in RJ

Join Teachers Unite

Facilitate authentic student sharing about discontents

Tier 2- Restoring community and justice

Create structures that facilitate student leadership/intervention (collaborative groupings/peer mediation)

Create structures for students to be involved in spaces where decisions are made about their schools and to share with outlets such as media/conferences

Tier 3- Reintegrating into the community

Contact Information

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A School-wide approach to Restorative Practices



Brady Smith, Principal Co-Director,
The James Baldwin School
A NYC Outward Bound School

The James Baldwin School



“It is our mission... at the James Baldwin School, to provide a haven for students who have previously experienced school as unresponsive to their needs as individuals. We wish for all students to find their voice and to speak knowledgeably and thoughtfully on issues that concern their school, their world. We aid students in this endeavor by personalizing our learning situations, by democratizing and humanizing the school environment...”

The James Baldwin School



- A NYC DOE Transfer High School
- All students must have attended a previous high school for at least one year
- Serves students from all five boroughs
- Consortium PBAT school
- Partnered with NYC Outward Bound Schools

Our Core Values



- Commitment to Peace
- Commitment to Justice
- Commitment to Democracy
- Respect for Humanity
- Respect for Diversity
- Respect for the Truth
- Respect for the Intellect

Restorative Practices at JBS



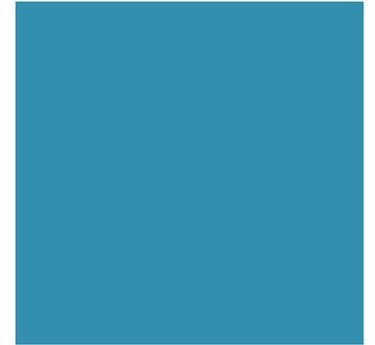
You must have a community before you can restore an individual to the community.

- Advisory Crew (1 adult to ~ 16 students)
 - Community building/acclimation
 - Fosters connectedness
 - Rotation includes socio-emotional skill-building
 - BUILD, Conflict Resolution
- Intensives
- Democracy Block
- Town Meeting
- Wellness Team

Restorative Practices at JBS

When our core values or community norms are violated:

- Re-entry meetings
- Fairness Committee
- Peer Mediation
- SW Mediation
- Circles (community-building/harm and healing)



New at JBS this year:

- Restorative Coordinator
 - Funded with no additional resources
 - Consensus decision re funding from staff
- Core Value Response protocol
 - In process for two years
 - ‘Borrowed’ from Vanguard and others
 - Tuned for our context, including modifying to include role for RC



<p style="text-align: center;"><u>LEVEL 1</u> DISRUPTION</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Disrupting teaching and learning; Disturbing the learning environment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>LEVEL 2</u> DISRESPECT</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Disrespecting self, classmates or adults; Instigating conflict</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>LEVEL 3</u> THREATENING SAFETY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Engaging in behavior that endangers the school community</p>
<p><u>STANDARD RESPONSE:</u></p> <p><u>Sent to Advisor</u></p> <p>Options for advisor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with classroom teacher • Restorative approaches (Re-entry meeting, fairness committee, mediation, circle etc.) • Phone call home 	<p><u>STANDARD RESPONSE:</u></p> <p><u>Sent to Restorative Coordinator</u></p> <p>Options for Restorative Coordinator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restorative approaches • Phone call home; family conference, if necessary • Meeting with social worker 	<p><u>STANDARD RESPONSE</u></p> <p><u>Sent to Principal Co-director</u></p> <p>Options for administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone call home; family conference, if necessary • Restorative approaches • Suspension (Sent home immediately, re-entry meeting with family member required) • Potential legal response

CVR

- Level 1 – sent to advisor
- Level 2 – sent to RC
 - Receives student, determines appropriate restorative process, calendars next steps and tracks follow-up meetings and agreements
- Level 3 – sent to Principal Co-director
 - Only person who can suspend
 - Involves Wellness Rep and Advisor in decision
 - Works with RC to calendar restorative processes upon return from suspension



Feedback and tuning of CVR

- Visited schools with similar approaches
- Tuned draft CVR in August
- Rolled out to students in fall with opportunities for student feedback
- Tuned again during three faculty meetings
- Descriptive Consultancy
 - With BCS and Lyons reps in January
 - With interested and available JBS staff ongoing



Next steps for JBS

- Improve acculturation processes, create a stronger community
- Improve communication, sharing of info and tracking of processes
- Expand opportunities for explicit socio-emotional skill-building
- Become a truly transformative school



Restorative v. Transformative schools

On his Restorative Justice Center Blog, Howard Zehr(2011) distinguishes between the questions asked in a restorative versus transformative setting. He writes:

“[In a Restorative Approach, t]he incident is a violation of people and relationships. It creates obligations to make things right. Resolution involves looking at the harm caused by the incident: harm to the person(s) who were victimized, harm to the instigator/aggressor(s), and harm to the larger community and asks “How can this harm be repaired?”

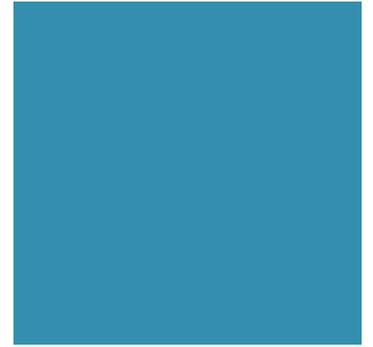
- Who has been hurt and what are their needs?
- Who is obligated to address these needs?
- Who has a stake in this situation and what is the process to involve them in making things right and preventing future occurrences?

[In the Transformative Approach, t]he incident may have occurred as a result, in part, of unhealthy relationships and social systems. It creates obligations to build new or better relationships. This must happen not only at an individual level but at the level of social structures and institutional policies. Resolution involves changing wider social systems in ways that help to prevent the occurrence and re-occurrence of harmful incidents.

- What social circumstances promoted the harmful behavior?
- What structural similarities exist between the incident and others like it?
- What measures could prevent future occurrences?” (Zehr, 2011).

A School-wide approach to Restorative Practices

To paraphrase Zehr, “new and better relationships... must happen not only at an individual level but at the level of social structures and institutional policies.”



Contact information

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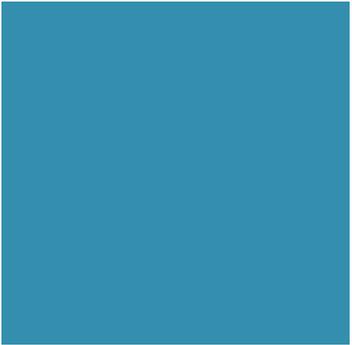
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Q & A

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