

# Restorative Questions: *Using them better*

## Restorative Practices Small Group Conference Script

When it's clear who's made the mistake and who's been hurt by the mistake (not often the case!)



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- **What** happened? *Watch other student for emotion as this student shares the story – how do they react?*

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- **What** do you think of (harmed person's) idea? Or
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- **What** is a fair way to deal with it if (mistake-maker) doesn't do what they have agreed to here?
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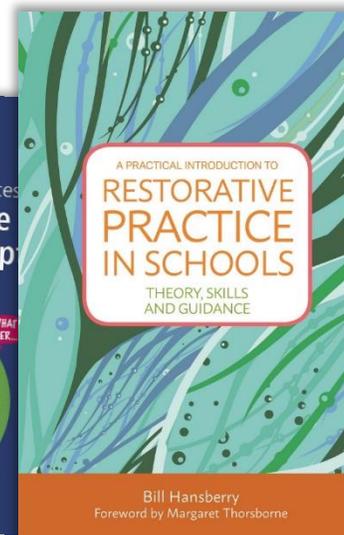
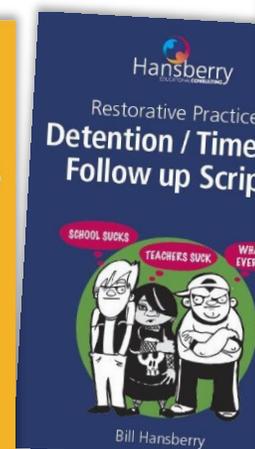
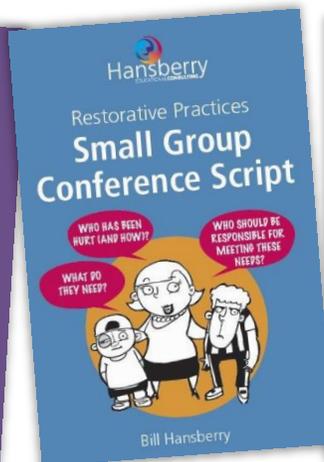
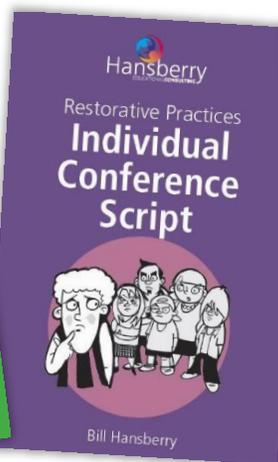
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# Restorative Questioning Basics



The skeleton script!

If you've been harmed:

- What was it like when it happened?
- How has it been since?
- How has this affected you?
- What will make this better?

If you've caused harm:

- What happened
- Thoughts then?
- Thoughts now?
- Who's been affected?
- How has ... been affected?  
(What rule/right has been affected?)
- What will make this better?



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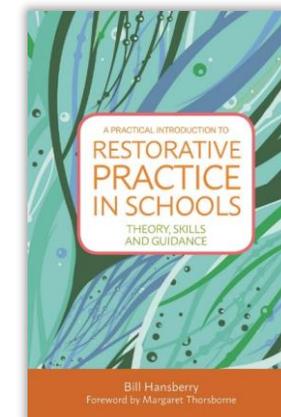
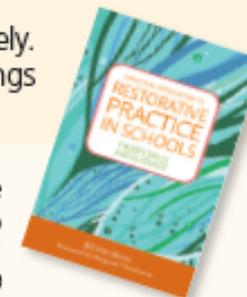
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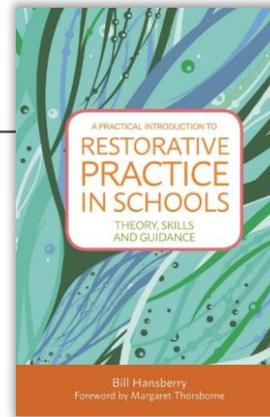
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## Other ways to ask ‘What happened?’

One can ask ‘What happened?’ in numerous ways, such as:

- ‘What’s happening?’
- ‘Tell us what happened’ or ‘What were you thinking when you...?’
- ‘Can you share with us what happened from your side?’
- ‘So, tell us what was happening the way you saw it.’
- ‘What was happening when you became involved?’
- ‘What’s happened and what was your part in the problem?’
- ‘Can you tell us some more about that? And what happened next?’



Can you think of other wording?



“... what happened?”

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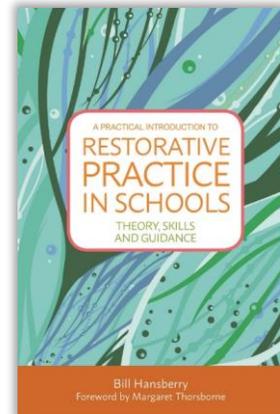
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## Other ways to ask 'What were you thinking at the time?'

Other ways of asking 'What were you thinking at the time?' include:

- 'When you did..., can you tell us what was going through your mind?'
- 'What made you decide to do/say that?'
- 'What was happening for you at the time that you did...?'
- 'What did you hope would happen when you...?'
- 'What were you expecting would happen?'
- 'How did you come to think that doing...was okay?'
- 'What was going on in your head at that time?'
- 'What was going on for you at that time?'
- 'If we replayed the video file to the point where you..., tell us what you were thinking.'
- 'What was the purpose of doing it that way?'
- 'If you did know what you were thinking, what would it be?'
- 'What were you saying to yourself at that moment?'
- 'What were you wanting to happen?'

Can you think of other wording?



“... thinking?”

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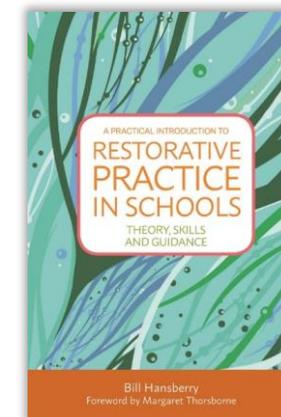
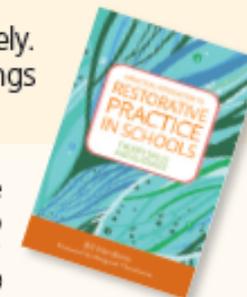
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### Other ways to ask ‘What do you think now?’

‘What do you think now?’ can be asked in the following ways:

- ‘In the time since you did..., about what have you thought?’
- ‘What do you think about that decision now?’
- ‘What do you think about your choice at that time now that we’re having a chat about it?’
- ‘What do you think about the way you behaved?’
- ‘What have you thought about what you did since it happened?’
- ‘Looking back on when you did that, what do you think now?’
- ‘Have you thought about it since? What do you think about what you did?’
- ‘If you had your time again, what would you do differently?’
- ‘Now that you’ve heard from...what do you think now about what you did?’

Can you think of other wording?



“... and what about now?”

# If stuck...

- 'Was what you did fair or unfair? Tell us how it was unfair/fair.'
- 'Was that the helpful or the unhelpful thing to do? What was helpful/unhelpful about what you did?'
- 'Was your choice to do that a good one or a poor one?'
- 'Did that choice make things better or worse?'
- 'Was that behaviour kind or unkind?'

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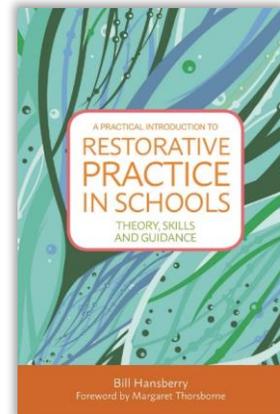
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Other ways to ask ‘Who has been affected by what you did, and how?’

Ways to ask ‘Who has been affected by what you did, and how?’ include:

- ‘Who has your behaviour affected?’
- ‘How do you think...has been hurt or upset by what you did?’
- ‘When you...how do you think it was for...?’
- ‘What do you think it was like for...when you...?’
- ‘You said that you... How do you think that was for...?’
- ‘When you did..., how do you think it was for...?’

Can you think of other wording?



**“Who’s been affected?”**

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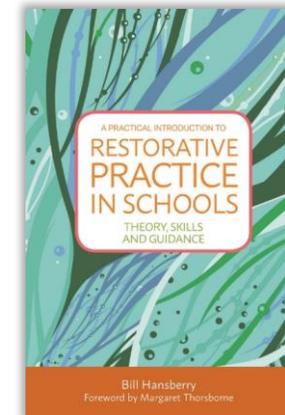
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Other ways to ask ‘What did you think when this happened?’

One can also ask ‘What did you think when this happened?’ as follows:

- ‘Tell us your story.’
- ‘Tell us your version of events and what you thought when this happened.’

Can you think of other wording?



- 
- ‘When this happened to you, what were you thinking?’
  - ‘When you first realised what...did, what did you think?’
  - ‘What was going through your mind when this was happening?’
  - ‘What have you thought about [how have you felt] since?’ (Optional)

“What did you think when...?”

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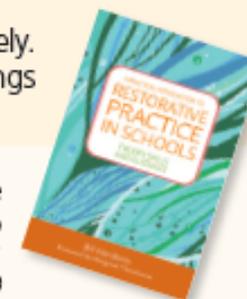
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- ‘What has it been like for you since that moment?’
- ‘What has [school, recess time, lunch time and/or being in this class] been like for you since it happened?’
- ‘How have you felt about things since it happened?’
- ‘What has it been like to be around [wrongdoer’s name] since it happened?’
- ‘Since this happened, what sort of things have been going through your mind?’
- ‘Can you share with us some of the things that you have thought/how you have felt about this since it happened?’

Can you think of other wording?



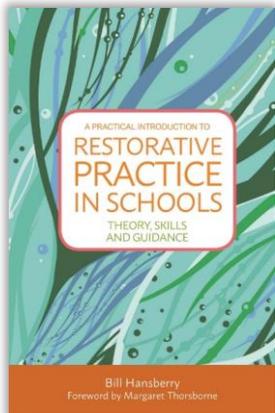
“Since...?”

Other ways to ask ‘How has this affected you and others?’

Other ways of asking ‘How has this affected you and others?’ are:

- ‘How have you been affected by what happened?’
- ‘What impact has this had on you?’
- ‘Since this happened, how have things been different for you?’
- ‘Since this happened, how have things changed for you?’
- ‘Since this happened, what’s been different about coming to [school and/or class]?’

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“how has this affected you?”

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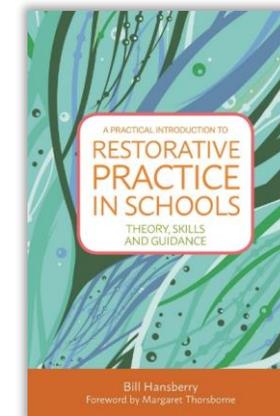
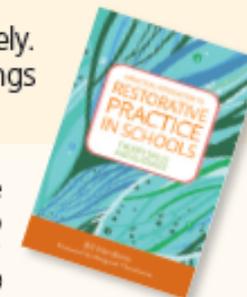
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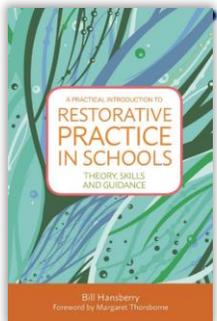


- ‘What do you think needs to happen to put things right again?’
- ‘What do you need to have things fixed [as much as they *can* be]?’
- ‘What things do you think need to happen to put right some of the harm?’
- ‘What needs to happen to clean up this mess [metaphor]?’
- ‘What would make things better for you right now?’
- ‘What would make it alright/safe for you to come back to [school and/or class] now?’

Asking the harmed student first gives the wrongdoer the opportunity to take cues from the harmed student and gives them a better chance of answering the same questions helpfully:

- ‘What do you think of [the harmed person’s] idea?’
- ‘What needs to happen to fix this?’ (Now directed to the wrongdoer)

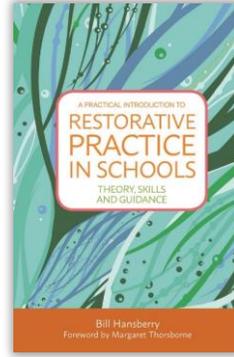
Can you think of other wording?



# Repair focused questions

# Doesn't look sorry!

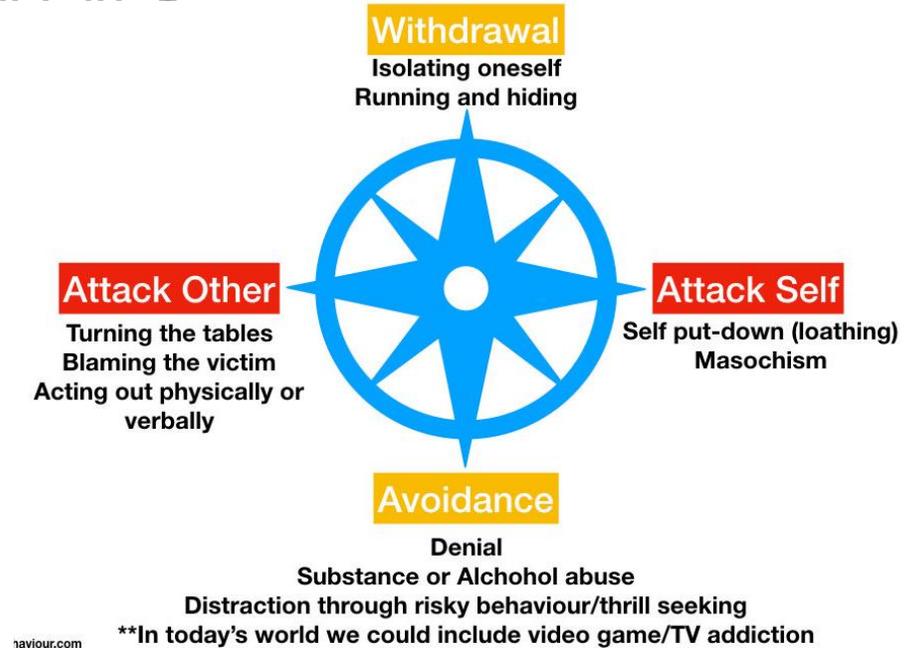
*When an apology seems insincere or is not forthcoming*  
These questions, asked respectfully, can be helpful:



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- 'For what exactly are you apologising?'
- 'You have agreed that an apology is needed for what you did. Is there any way I can help you to do this?'
- 'I'm confused. When you and I spoke before this conference [or chat], you took responsibility and told me that you thought an apology might be one way to sort the problem out. Now you're having trouble with this. Can you help us understand what's happening?'
- 'Would you like to make this apology here in this conference or later in private?' (Check that this is okay with those harmed.)
- 'I'm noticing that you are not looking very sorry. I might be wrong, though. Can you please explain to us what is happening for you at the moment?'
- 'Is there something about which we still need to talk?'
- 'We've heard you say "sorry". How will "sorry" look tomorrow, next week or next month?'

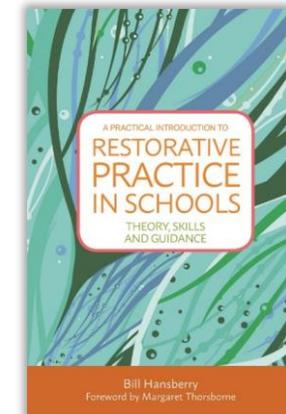


# Can't say sorry!

A teacher can ask some questions that may lead a young person to conveying their regret or to help him or her be aware that their body language is not matching what they are saying:

- 'If we could go back in time and this happened again, would you do the same thing?'
- 'What do you think [student's name] needs to hear from you right now?'
- 'What do you think people here need to hear from you right now?'
- 'Was it your intention to make [student's name] so afraid/miserable?'
- 'How do you think [student's name] was affected by what you did?' (Re-visiting this question can help re-establish the wrongdoer's understanding of the harm they caused and can sometimes be acceptable to a harmed student.)
- 'How do you want to be remembered, as someone who was kind or unkind? So what could you say about that now?'

Can you think of other wording?



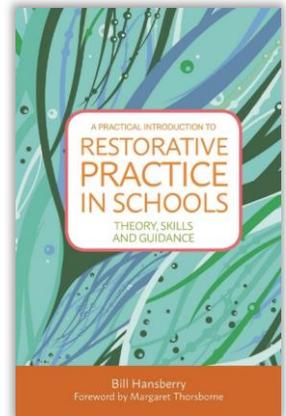
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# Doesn't seem to be satisfied with apology!

When apologies aren't accepted by those harmed, it can create a very sticky situation. It shows that they may not have been satisfied by the outcome of the conference. In this case, these questions can be asked:

- 'What can...do to show you they really *are* sorry?'
- 'Is there anything else that needs to happen for you to believe that they are sorry?'
- 'What else could...do to show they are sorry?'
- 'Is there something else happening here that we don't understand yet that you could share with us?'



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