



Implementing Restorative Practices: Thoughts for Leaders

Before diving headlong into Restorative Practices, I'd encourage you to interrogate your own motives for wanting to begin, or continue this cultural change in your school.

So you're wondering what implementing Restorative Practices might offer your school community.

The idea of running a school where Restorative Practices are used to build, restore and manage relationships is indeed an *attractive* notion. As educators we all daydream of a school where staff, students and parents invest in relationships and have the skills and attitudes to deal effectively with each other when conflicts and tensions crop up. Who wouldn't want this? It's a worthwhile dream, and we know student learning outcomes would be a direct beneficiary of a culture like this.

Before diving headlong into Restorative Practices, I'd encourage you to interrogate your own motives for wanting to begin, or continue this cultural change in your school. Sit with a trusted colleague and ask them to ask you this simple question "*why Restorative Practices?*" Ask them to make notes, or even record you as you attempt to articulate your response. Don't think too hard, just say what comes into your head – describe the feelings, the images and the words. Ask your colleague to read back what you said – especially the *non-jargony* stuff that came straight off the top of your head. We've all learned enough about student wellbeing to rattle off the usual catch phrases. I want you to dig deeper than this – beyond the rhetoric. I want to help you begin articulate your reasons and **vision** for developing a restorative school and yes, most of all, it will illicit *feelings*.

Restorative Practices only truly take hold in schools where the Principal has a well-articulated vision for Restorative Practices and a steadfast belief in working restoratively.

Once you've had your turn, turn the tables and record your colleague's responses to this question. Maybe this is something your whole leadership team can do. Of course, if you do

this in one sitting, the responses will become more polished, as everyone builds on what was said before!

Then consider the following questions:

- Have you worked in a school Restorative Practices have made a measurable positive difference and you wish to emulate this here?
- Have you heard good things from colleagues about Restorative Practices but not seen it for yourself yet?
- Is it that you have some staff in your school have a particular experience and/or interest in Restorative Practices and their successes in handling situations restoratively have sparked your interest
- Has someone from up the organisational food chain suggested Restorative Practices to you as a vehicle for school improvement?
- Are things in your school so dire that nothing seems to be working and Restorative Practices is worth a shot?
- Is it that Restorative Practices have become quite *trendy* in your professional circles and you want to keep up with the Jones'?
- Do Restorative Practices resonate deeply with your own values and beliefs or the ethos of your school (or both)?

I ask these questions for good reasons. Restorative Practices only truly take hold in schools where the Principal has a well-articulated vision for Restorative Practices and a steadfast belief in working restoratively. These leaders also work hard to:

- behave restoratively with all members of the community, especially when things are not going well
- Admit their mistakes quickly and emphatically
- Apologise when they get it wrong instead of making excuses or engaging in political double-speak
- Continue to develop their restorative leadership style
- Articulate their vision for Restorative Practices and actively promote Restorative Practices as *the way we are trying to do things around here*
- Actively learn more about Restorative Practices through professional reading, viewing, and attending PD

The change you will be asking some members of your community to make in their thinking about how we should address conflict and wrongdoing is enormous.

- Openly coach others by modelling Restorative Practices to them – *mistakes and all!*
- Adequately resource the development of Restorative Practices in dollar terms
- Never shy away from using restorative responses to the big and public issues and incidents and in doing so, communicate to their school community that restorative practices will be the go to, especially when the stakes are high

These behaviours are the opposite of merely announcing that Restorative Practices will be implemented across the school and then delegating the implementation (as an add-on) to someone else's very full role description.

Those who are walking the Restorative Practices implementing road ahead of you will tell you that the Restorative Practices implementation road is bumpy, highly emotional for all and for some members of your staff, RPs will be a bridge too far. If they aren't experiencing this, it's my guess they are not doing it right or don't have their finger on the pulse.

The change you will be asking some members of your community to make in their thinking about how we should address conflict and wrongdoing is enormous. Along the way you will find some of your own core beliefs about behaviour management exposed and challenged.



Blood and Thorsborne sum things up well by saying:

Moving from a punitive rule based discipline system to a system underpinned by relational values requires a change in the hearts and minds of practitioners, students, their parents and the wider community. Without understanding the enormity of this task a few good people in each school will be working very hard to make a difference, with limited impact.
(2006:1)

...many of us will continue to do the wrong thing well, rather than running the risk of change and doing the right thing poorly for a while?

For many educators, the principles and philosophies underpinning a restorative headset involves a fundamental paradigm shift.

Usually, for someone to change paradigms, they need to become painfully aware that their existing paradigm just isn't delivering. Put simply, we need to reach a level of *distress* that is so great that it becomes *unpalatable* to keep doing what we have been doing. Here, we stand on the precipice of accepting that what we previously believed was *the right thing* is now in fact, *the wrong thing*. This moment is racked with *guilt (shame)* and sometimes a sprinkling of *self-disgust*! We may end up questioning our core values and even our view of ourselves as a person and an educator.

When faced with such punishing emotions, in order to avoid these awful feelings, many of us will continue to do the *wrong thing well*, rather than running the risk of change and *doing the right thing poorly* for a while?

Change is a very, very emotional process. Ask your accounts manager to change something as seemingly *unemotional* as accounting software and you will have emotion to deal with. Ask a teacher to change how they respond to student behaviour, an issue that many teachers hang their pride on, and the stage is set for high emotion.

So, I urge you to investigate your motives thoroughly because deep implementation of Restorative Practices will be difficult, rocky, snotty, teary, messy and highly emotional. Some staff will grieve the *good old days*. As the leader, be ready to be *blamed* by the traditional disciplinarians for *declining standards* of behaviour and respect in your school! These accusations will of course not be supported by the data (assuming data had been collected), but as we all know, data doesn't convince those invested in a particular way of looking at the world.

If I haven't scared you off yet, then you may already have a sense of how powerful Restorative Practices are as a vehicle for whole school improvement and how Restorative Practices will transform the way people interact in your school.

The good news is that you are not alone! Many have walked this road before you and have been kind enough to share their stories and research about the challenges of implementing Restorative Practices in books and articles. It is not my intention

So, what are your school values? Do they fit with RP's? Can an obvious link be quickly and easily made?

here to give detailed guidance on the *ins and outs* of successfully implementing Restorative Practices; I will however give some key tips from my experiences and point you in the direction of some very good books and articles on the subject.

Begin with your school values

You just knew school values were going to come up didn't you? You already know that values are useless to a school if the only place they live is on the fancy school signage and letterhead. In schools where people can articulate the values and explain how they apply to the different contexts, values get traction and influence people's behaviour.

So, what are your school values? Do they fit with RP's? Can an obvious link be quickly and easily made? I'd urge you to do some of your own research about the values that underpin RP's and see how they sit alongside your existing school values. Do colleagues see what you see? Ask around, at very least, you'll gain a deeper insight into what the school values mean to different people in your school.

Build Restorative Practices into your school's improvement plan and prioritise

This is pretty self-explanatory, but I often find a leadership team pushing hard to make their school restorative only to find (after some asking around) that Restorative Practices are not explicitly mentioned by name in the school's improvement plan.

Alternatively, Restorative Practices does feature in the improvement plan, but alongside three other massive change initiatives that might involve wholesale changes to the teaching of numeracy, a building project that will involve displacement of classrooms and a project on trauma that will tie up all student free days for the year.

A question I often ask leaders in schools is '*what are the competing priorities and is it wise to wait for beginning implementation of Restorative Practices?*'

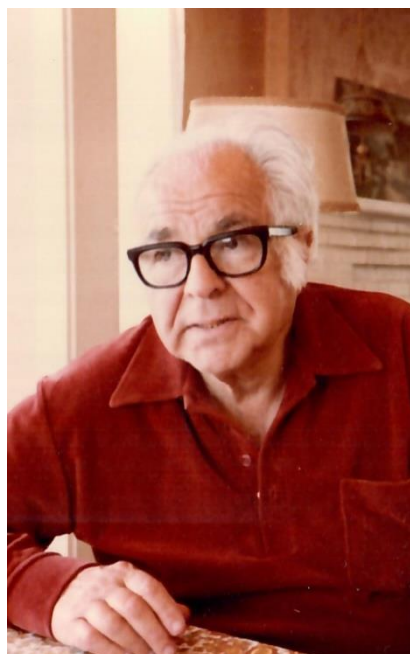
The reason Restorative Practices work so well for humans on an emotional level work is explained by a theory of human emotion known as Affect Script Psychology (ASP).

Investigate the existing psychological models that inform practice and how well they *mesh* with *Affect Script Psychology*?

It was once said that when it comes to the relationship between theory and practice “*Some people like to study the roots while others just want to pick the fruit*”.

Years of experience working with schools in implementing Restorative Practices has taught me that to reap abundant fruit; teachers and teacher-leaders do need to know a bit about the roots.

The reason Restorative Practices works so well for humans on an emotional level work is explained by a theory of human emotion known as *Affect Script Psychology* (ASP). Affect Script Psychology was developed by the late Silvan Tomkins, an American psychologist and philosopher whose work in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s allowed us to develop whole new systems of understanding about emotions and how they motivate us. Ironically Affect Script Psychology wasn't developed *for RP's*, but we are confident that Tomkins would have been very pleased with its application within Restorative Practices.



Tomkins taught psychology at Princetown and Rudkers and was the author of the four volume work '*Affect Imagery Consciousness*'. *Affect Script Psychology* explains how we humans come to care and connect to each other, why we humans respond to our emotions in such wildly varying ways, and what happens to us on an emotional level when harmful behaviour alters *what we care about*. Most importantly, Affect Script Psychology explains the emotional conditions that need

to be in place for us to successfully reconnect with our communities of care in the wake of social and relational upset.

What does the data say about the effectiveness of detentions, suspensions and the school's overall approach to conflict and wrongdoing?

An understanding of Tomkins' teachings about *affect* is a wonderful advantage for a school wanting to gain the full benefit from RP's. A publication called *"The Psychology of Emotion in Restorative Practice"*, edited by Vick Kelly and Margaret Thorsborne explains Affect Script Psychology effectively through a series of case studies.

Your school's current policies on student discipline, personal responsibility and wellbeing will be underpinned by a particular field, or perhaps an eclectic mix or two or more fields of

psychology. Four I constantly come across in my work are *Choice Theory, Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy, Individual Psychology and more recently Positive Psychology*. All are extremely powerful frameworks in their own right. When implemented with vision and purpose, they can drive improved performance across student learning outcomes and wellbeing.



These or other models do not need to be jettisoned to make way for Affect Script Psychology (ASP). Quite to the contrary! With a little research of your own you will

see the extraordinary alignment between ASP and other well-grounded psychological frameworks. However, some basic training in Affect Script Psychology is in my opinion necessary and never fails to capture the hearts and minds of those working in schools and organisations. One secondary teacher recently commented to me that a day's workshop on Affect Script Psychology had *been like therapy for the staff*.

Be guided by the organisational change experts

Perhaps one of the best suited change models for Restorative Practices is John Kotter's model as outlined by Thorsborne and Blood (2014). Kotter outlines eight steps that an organisation has to get right for change to stick. I'll summarise these briefly:

1. Making a case for change

Simply declaring *from on high* that this school will use Restorative Practices from now on will not achieve a great deal on its own. In schools where leaders may have historically lacked a clear purpose, strategy and direction about what is being implemented and when, (aka *projectitis*), many staff become jaded and develop the attitude that *this too shall pass*. An overall resistance to change develops within the school because in staff's eyes, nothing before has been implemented well.

Making a strong case for change involves forming a compelling argument for why this school needs to begin implementing Restorative Practices immediately. The most obvious place to begin is to look at existing school performance data across student wellbeing. Data on students' feelings of connectedness to school, levels of peer acceptance, and even opinion surveys in relation to current disciplinary practices can offer incredible insights. What does the data say about the effectiveness of detentions, suspensions and the school's overall approach to conflict and wrongdoing? Are these approaches delivering the goods in the form of improved student conduct, or does the data paint a different picture? There are brave questions here to ask students, staff and parents about the effectiveness of current discipline and conflict management practices.



Once data is compiled, can it be interrogated by staff in a way that demonstrates a need for a different way of thinking and a different set of approaches to disruption, conflict and wrongdoing? There are

important conversations to be had about the *outcomes* we want to achieve through our wellbeing and disciplinary processes, and whether current approaches deliver these outcomes.

Making the implementation of Restorative Practices a bolt-on task to an already existing student wellbeing, or pastoral care team will simply not cut it. They will have existing responsibilities

When there is a fight on the school oval between two year nine students at lunch time, what outcomes do we want for the students involved, what do we need them to understand about the impact of their actions on others? What about the relationship between the two of them from then on? What about their friends, who may be keen to see round two? What about those who witnessed the fight, the teachers on duty who feared being injured as they pondered their duty of care to both boys. What outcomes do we want for the parents of the students and for the school community at large? How do we currently respond to such an incident? Does it deliver the outcomes we wish for? If not, what else might work?

Making a case for change based on a range of reliable information sources is both a respectful and logical approach and is a critical first step to implementing Restorative Practices.

2. Putting a RP's implementation team together

Also known as a *guiding coalition*, this team of people will become responsible for the implementation and eventual maintenance of Restorative Practices in your school. Research tells us that this team needs to be a group with the single brief of setting direction for, and overseeing the development of Restorative Practices in the school. Without a Restorative Practices implementation team, you will not see sustainable change.

Making the implementation of Restorative Practices a *bolt-on task* to an already existing student wellbeing, or pastoral care team will simply not cut it. They will have existing responsibilities and directions that they will not want hijacked.

The Restorative Practices implementation team will need to consist of individuals who are firstly passionate about Restorative Practices and secondly, able to influence others in the school to their way of thinking and thirdly, be in roles of influence within the school. Do not make the mistake of assuming that those in your *paid positions of responsibility* will be the best influencers among staff. Your team will be the brave and committed advocates for Restorative Practices who aren't afraid to do professional reading, try new approaches and probably most importantly, take the professional risk of working

Create some flexibility in the school's timetable for members of your team to do restorative work such as preparing and running a restorative conference to address that fight between those year nine boys, or to co-plan and co-facilitate a 'No-Blame classroom conference' for the year six class where learning has stopped because of widespread issues of harassment and bullying.

with students in front of colleagues to demonstrate a variety of restorative processes.

However, committed these people seem to be, never take their good-will for granted. Resource their additional duties appropriately by providing release from their other duties for them to meet. Don't expect the team to always meet in their own time. Be prepared to *fork out* for them to attend conferences on Restorative Practices. Even encourage them to showcase your school's work to date.

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Your Restorative Practices implementation team will need to feel as though they are leading something that is special, valued and worthwhile.

3. Create a vision for the future

One of the first tasks of your RP's implementation team will be to develop a vision for Restorative Practices in your school. This is a task that will take some time because to develop a vision, this team will need to know what Restorative Practices can look like in a school. This is often achieved through reading and sharing of articles and publications about Restorative Practices, trawling you-tube for clips about Restorative Practices in schools (like www.rpforschools.net) or visiting other schools and attending conferences to hear others share their own vision and experiences with Restorative Practices.

Stephen Covey tells us to always *begin with the end in mind*. So what 'end' does the team have in mind?

4. Communicating the vision – winning hearts and minds

The activity mentioned above will culminate in a *vision statement* that will need to be creatively and effectively communicated to the rest of the school community. Sharing

The members of your implementation team will need to be well liked and trusted by a critical mass of staff at your school. Like it or not, cultural change is always tied to how well regarded the advocates of the change are among colleagues.

vision effectively requires skill, careful planning and some charisma! Essentially, it's the business of sharing a set of images

and experiences you have inside your head with others, so they can see and imagine in a similar way you do.

Winning hearts and minds is what effective leaders do. A key ingredient to success in this realm is a keen understanding of emotion and motivation. Your RP's team may have the best set of well researched and articulately presented arguments that your school needs Restorative Practices, but fail to gain any traction because they lack the ability to communicate how Restorative Practices will be in the best interests of their colleagues.

Crushing opposition to RP's with logical argument and compelling research will never be a successful strategy because...."A man convinced against his will is of that same opinion still". (Dale Carnegie)

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5. Removing obstacles and empowering action

Kotter's 6th step will involve your implementation team in the business of anticipating potential obstacles to the change they are looking for and ways that these obstacles can be sidestepped or even eliminated.

The first obstacle that springs to mind is those colleagues that we unfairly label as *resisters*. These members of staff are all too easily written off and left alone, or directly challenged (combatted) by leadership about their resistance. This only causes ill feeling and more resistance. Writing these people off can be a mistake because sometimes, if handled adroitly, these people can become the best advocates for Restorative Practices you have.

What will need to change so we can give teachers the time they feel they need to work in a more relational and restorative manner with students? This will be more complicated than just offering to release them in the middle of a science lesson, to attempt to restore a relationship in the hallway...



What's well worth remembering is that people resist change for reasons that make perfect sense to them, and if you take the time to listen carefully, these

reasons may make sense to you as well. Think about the last time you found yourself *not sold* on a new or different way of doing things. Did you just resist because you felt like it, or did you have concerns that were real to you and based on your own experiences? What if someone had asked you for your thoughts on the matter, not so they could combat your every point with logic, but out of a desire to understand where you were coming from?

As well as the oft-discussed *people obstacles*, there will also be very real *systemic obstacles* to implementing the full arsenal of Restorative Practices in your school. The restorative way of doing things will see situations being responded to differently. Initially, these new ways will appear to be time and labour intensive. Over time, people will come to see the incredible time savings down the track. Unfortunately, for many, this will remain hidden in the beginning.

What will need to change so we can give teachers the time they feel they need to work in a more relational and restorative manner with students? This will be more complicated than just offering to release them in the middle of a science lesson, to attempt to *restore a relationship* in the hallway with a mouthy eleven-year-old girl, while only metres away, bicarb and vinegar sit within arm's length of 29 other enthusiastic students and a very anxious parent helper!

6. Generating short term wins

I don't know about you, but if I put myself outside of my comfort zone and try a new way of doing something, I want to see some

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results pretty quickly. Otherwise, I very quickly lose motivation and go back to the old way. This is the reason I have never

persisted with teaching myself touch typing, in spite of the fact that my two finger method is slow and sloppy!

Your Restorative Practices team will need to plan for measuring and publicising success from the outset. Staff and students will experience positive differences from RP's immediately, but how will these moments be captured and shared in a way where others will feel they can share in the success?

What will be some indicators along the way to reassure us that bit-by-bit, we are making progress toward the vision we have for RP's in our school?

Could this be as simple as asking people to share stories in a staff circle of their successes or epiphanies from using restorative questioning with a student, or group of students? Restorative justice is about creating safe spaces and opportunities to listen and respond to stories of harm (Morrison 2007:156). It seems serendipitous that a critical part of bringing people on board to a restorative way of doing things involves a commitment to gathering and telling the stories that are *made* as people give restorative approaches a go in their day to day interactions with students. If you change the stories, you will change the culture. Become a collector of stories.

Might some of these wins be in the form of data from a simple survey that is given to students weekly about how they felt at school this week? Could it be the sharing of a letter of thanks from a parent who was thrilled with the outcome of a restorative conference to address bullying of their child by another child?

There are endless ways to generate and communicate the short term wins. The trick seems to be *keeping at it!*

7. Keeping the pressure on

Kotter's 8th step is all about keeping the ball rolling. Schools are incredibly busy and dynamic places. Something that makes the news on a Monday morning can result in a new dictate from Central Office by 12pm. We live in a time of fast news and fast political responses to this news. This makes all of us very vulnerable to developing a crisis driven style of leadership. As we

Maintenance [of your RPs program] will also involve planning for staff turnover. This is one of the biggest challenges facing any school nowadays. As people leave, so will their expertise.

become accustomed to jumping from one crisis to the next, days become weeks and weeks quickly turn into months where none

of our daily work has been to do with moving the school toward its vision.

There will always be a host of competing interests that will feel as though they are pulling you away from the business of creating a restorative school.

What we do know from the research on change management is that allowing complacency or *crisis driven management* into our work spells death for the change process. The best way I have seen implementation teams overcome the competing forces on the change process is by generating timelines for different goals of the implementation process. Even though these timelines will have to change from time to time, their mere existence will create a *pull* that keeps things moving.

There's also something to be said for how *detailed* these goals need to be. The rule of thumb is the more clearly detailed a goal is, the greater pull it exerts.

By week three term two, each member of the implementation team will have planned and facilitated, or sat in on a classroom problem solving circle

By week five term 4, the first draft of our 'formal conference agreement template' will be on the shared drive for staff to record conference agreements on, and then save into the 'active restorative agreements' folder.

By the end of this year, all members of the RP's implementation team will have undergone training in formal conference facilitation and will have facilitated or co-facilitated a restorative conference for a suspension-level incident.

8. Maintaining the gains

Finally, Kotter talks about the importance of maintaining the gains that have been achieved. One thing that my time in schools has taught me is that *creating change* and *sustaining change* are very different skills-sets.

Principals should be trained conference facilitators - out there planning and facilitating restorative conferences. If you are a Principal reading this, I'm glad you are reading this! The signs are positive already.

There are challenges implicit in the ongoing running of any system. There's of course the ongoing fine-tuning and tweaking of processes. In RP's you will find that the *devil in the detail* will

involve your systems for keeping people in the loop in regards to what's been dealt with restoratively, by whom, what the outcomes have been and how students will be held accountable to outcomes or restorative processes. My third book "*A Practical Introduction to Restorative Practice in Schools*" was written mainly with this in mind. This is available from the shop on my website www.hansberryec.com.au.

Maintenance will also involve planning for staff turnover. This is one of the biggest challenges facing any school nowadays. As people leave, so will their expertise. How will you succession plan for your 'RP's implementation team? When will the *implementation team* switch to being a *coordinating team* and how might the role of the team change to reflect the school's transition from *implementation phase* to *maintenance and refinement phase*?

How will the way the school employs teachers and leaders be influenced by Restorative Practices? Where in the job and person specification will RP's be mentioned? Will *a passion for and existing skill set in RP's* be foregrounded in the way the school advertises for positions?

When you start to consider the maintenance of RP's in a school, many things come to mind. It's impossible to plan for them all, as many won't become apparent until you are there.

Leaders leading the implementation from the front

I want now to speak directly to the leader in you. What follows is largely my personal opinion about what Principals do, themselves, to give their RP's implementation team the best chance to do meaningful and successful work.

Manage staff restoratively

Thorsborne and Blood (2006:1) make the very important point that in implementing Restorative Practices, school leaders sometimes fail to use the relational approaches with their own staff that they ask teachers to use with students and parents.

There were many occasions when an angry colleague wanted blood from a student and I believed a restorative conference would deliver the best outcomes. On these occasions I followed my colleague's preferred option...

In their zeal to see Restorative Justice embedded, school leaders may use coercion, isolation and threats to push staff to change their practice to become more relational and restorative! A restorative mode of leadership requires leaders working *with*

staff in the same spirit that they want staff to work in with students. Restorative schools simply don't happen in the absence of restorative leadership. The school's leadership, with the Principal at the front, must embrace and model restorative approaches in their work with students and in their management of staff.

Lead from the front

Principals should be trained conference facilitators - *out there* planning and facilitating restorative conferences. If you are a Principal reading this, I'm glad you are reading this! The signs are positive already.

Your staff are watching your every movement to gauge your level of investment in Restorative Practices, so please take my word for it, you won't achieve a restorative school through delegation.

In every school there is a hidden curriculum, which is about the way people treat each other, how teachers treat kids, how kids treat kids ... (Lickona 1994)

Build the Restorative Practices implementation team around yourself. Restorative values must be lived by those leading the implementation. I have seen many leaders completely *delegate* the implementation of Restorative Practices to others in the school and you guessed it, the new practices haven't taken hold in any meaningful way. It is a tragedy when such a potentially powerful way of doing things is passed over because leadership fail to go beyond paying it lip service.

Support, support, support, oh, and more support!

Marshall, Shaw and Freeman tell us that Restorative Practices require teachers to redefine their role in behaviour management to "relationship management" and that teachers need time and support to grapple with questions about the impact of punishment and potential alternatives based on a restorative

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philosophy. They remind us that teachers require understanding and time to practice and refine new skills and to reflect upon their own style. This occurs best in an environment that is

challenging yet supportive – in other words, high control / high support (see the social control window).

“The onus is also on school systems to ensure that teachers have access to substantial professional development that allows for progressive skill development with the aim that teachers will be able to confidently apply and model effective relationship management skills” (2002:7).



Experience has taught me the importance of supporting colleagues, even when I didn't agree with what they wanted to *do to* a student. There were

many occasions when an angry colleague *wanted blood* from a student and I believed a restorative conference would deliver the best outcomes. On these occasions I followed my colleague's preferred option (within reasonable limits), but I also negotiated for a restorative process to precede, or follow the sanction that my colleague was asking for. If I had not supported my colleagues in these circumstances, their trust in me would have taken a blow and with it may have ruined any chance of them coming around to a more restorative approach in the longer run. I sometimes made the decision to *lose a battle to win the war*. Some of the colleagues I supported in this way ended up being the school's biggest advocates for Restorative Practices.

What this taught me was that people ultimately engage in *something new* through their relationships with those they trust who are already doing the *new* thing. If these relationships are damaged, the opportunity to influence others is crippled.

Commit to ongoing professional learning and *for heaven's sake* do some reading!

To finish up, painfully aware that there is so much more I would like to share about implementing Restorative Practices in schools, I ask you to tap into the wealth of knowledge out there

about Restorative work in schools. I have lost count of the books, articles, videos, PowerPoint presentations on the web, old VHS videos, DVD's, downloaded YouTube clips and documentaries I've devoured over the years. I've been a true Restorative Junkie! Not everyone will be as obsessive as I've been, and nor should they be. What I am saying is that you need to do more than a bit of reading.

Remember, just you doing restorative work well in your school is not enough. You must be a *salesperson* for Restorative Practices. To do this, you need to be one of the well-read experts in your school.

If you have a passion for the possibilities of safer schools and more connected communities, let this passion stir you to embark upon your own learning journey into this joyous and hopeful field.

Finally

A commitment to Restorative Practices involves a deep commitment to the nitty-gritty work of building a more peaceful world. In a political climate where politicians actively encourage people to fear one another to gain votes, those who stand for reparation based justice face a challenge. **Are you up to it?**

Cowardice asks the question: is it safe? Expediency asks the question: is it popular? But conscience asks the question: Is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular – but one must take it because it's right.

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