

Compassionate Mediation as a Basis for Restorative Practices

John-Robert Curtin, PhD (c)

Three Components of all incidents

- **Offender**
- **Target**
- **Bystanders**

The Three Questions

The Three Questions

- 1. When did we decide other human beings were disposable?**

The Three Questions

1. When did we decide other human beings were disposable?
- 2. Is punishment the only way to correct negative behavior?**

The Three Questions

1. When did we decide other human beings were disposable?
2. Is punishment the only way to correct negative behavior?
- 3. Are punishment and accountability synonymous?**

Rethinking Compassion

**“We can't solve problems by
using the same kind of thinking
we used when we created
them.”**

— Albert Einstein

1879 – 1955

German-Swiss-American theoretical physicist

**“An eye for an eye and pretty soon
the whole world is blind”**

Mahatma Gandhi—

1899 – 1948

Leader of Indian nationalism who inspired movements for civil rights and freedom throughout the world.

Empathy and Compassion are not the same.

Empathy and pity are feelings, they can lead to compassionate action, but they are not compassion.

Compassion is an action, think of compassion as a verb not a noun. It is action not a feeling---empathy and pity are feelings...compassion is an action.

Compassion takes place when one purposely takes action to help alleviate the suffering of another.

In Restorative Justice it is understanding the pain, suffering, embarrassment, shame, fear, anger, and bewilderment in each participant, and working to restore all participants to a positive place.



Since all negative actions are a form of **violence**-----

What if the **violence is really a **virus**
and not a moral vacuum?**

**What if a violent person is afflicted
with a highly contagious virus and is
not a moral reprobate?**



Working with others: Listen

1. **Listen** with your **eyes** not just your **ears**
2. **Listen** with your **heart**
3. **Listen** with your **mind**—to understand not just to respond
4. **Respond** with your compassion, your attention, your body language, and your open questions

Compassionate Mediation is about **Listening**

Compassionate Mediation is about **Learning**

Compassionate Mediation is about getting
beneath the water

Compassionate Mediation is about **recognizing**
and **acknowledging feelings**

Compassionate Mediation is a first step toward
successful and meaningful Restorative Justice

**“Be ashamed to die until you
have won some victory for
humanity.”**

— Horace Mann

1796 – 1859

American educator, Founder – Antioch University