

The “TO” Window and Me: Confessions of a (sometimes) Restorative Leader

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- ▶ Certified de Bono Thinking Systems trainer



Why this workshop?

- ▶ Theory meeting practice.
- ▶ Reality and Research
- ▶ A bit o' learning with a bit o'fun



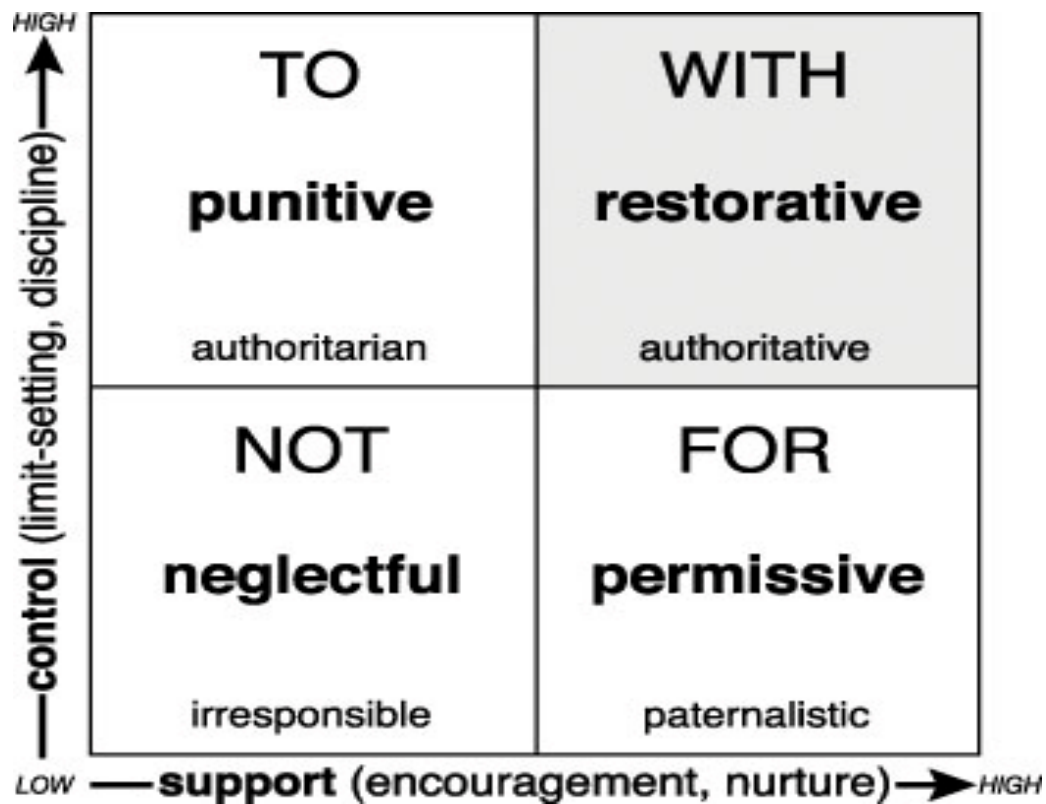
A Quick Review

- ▶ *“The fundamental premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them.”*

His Lordship, Ted Wachtel



Social Discipline Window - review



Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel from Daniel Glaser



Fair Process - review

- ▶ “Individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems – whether they themselves win or lose by those systems – when fair process is observed.

(Kim and Mauborgne, 1997)

- ▶ Engagement
 - ▶ Involving in decisions that affect them.
- ▶ Explanation
 - ▶ Explaining the reasoning behind a decision.
- ▶ Expectation clarity
 - ▶ Ensuring everyone understands the decision and what is expected of them.



Engagement

means involving individuals in the strategic decisions that affect them by asking for their input and allowing them to refute the merits of one another's ideas and assumptions. Engagement communicates management's respect for individuals and their ideas. Encouraging refutation sharpens everyone's thinking and builds better collective wisdom. Engagement results in better strategic decisions by management and greater commitment from all involved to execute those decisions.

Explanation

means that everyone involved and affected should understand why final strategic decisions are made as they are. An explanation of the thinking that underlies decisions makes people confident that managers have considered their opinions and have made decisions impartially in the overall interests of the company. An explanation allows employees to trust managers' intentions even if their own ideas have been rejected. It also serves as a powerful feedback loop that enhances learning.

Expectation clarity

requires that after a strategy is set, managers state clearly the new rules of the game. Although the expectations may be demanding, employees should know up front what standards they will be judged by and the penalties for failure. When people clearly understand what is expected of them, political jockeying and favoritism are minimized, and people can focus on executing the strategy rapidly.

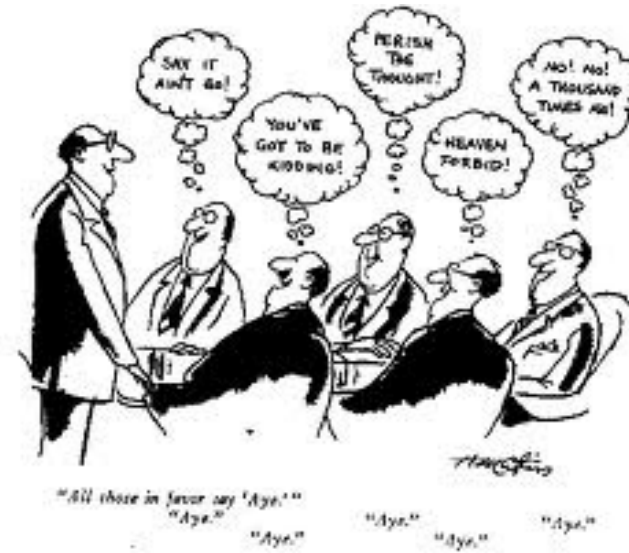


Restorative Leadership

The Goals is **THIS:**



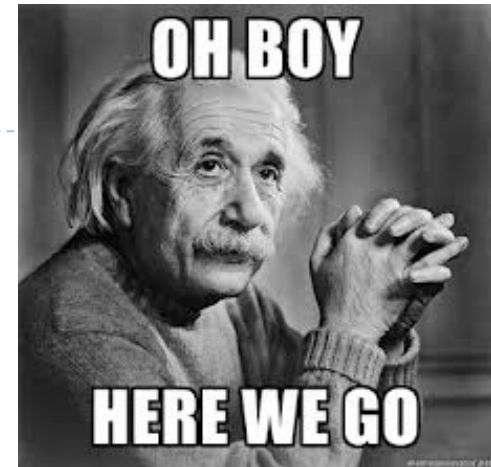
Not **THIS:**



My Journey

▶ School in Crisis

- ▶ Staff cuts, pay cuts, stipend cuts, class sizes,
- ▶ Leadership change
- ▶ Given the helm on the last day of school



▶ Direct application of Restorative Practices

- ▶ Open door policy; meetings with special interest groups
- ▶ Admin Team operating on a consensus model – expanded team
- ▶ Honest, transparent discussion on ALL matters
 - ▶ Budget, pay scales, stipends
- ▶ Assembling round tables to address particular issues
- ▶ Result..





What are the benefits of WITH
Leadership?

Benefits of Real “WITH” Leadership – Research

Gary Yukl, Leadership in Organizations, 2013

- ▶ Higher Decision Quality
- ▶ Decision Acceptance
- ▶ Satisfaction with Process
- ▶ Development of Participant Skills
- ▶ With other Players:
 - ▶ Subordinates,
 - ▶ Quality; acceptance; development of decision making skills; team building
 - ▶ Peers,
 - ▶ Quality, cooperation
 - ▶ Superiors,
 - ▶ Expertise of boss; “check-in” on boss’s perspective; Don’t go overboard
 - ▶ Outsiders
 - ▶ Understanding of clients, suppliers, etc.
 - ▶ Learn about their needs, strengthen networks, solve mutual problems.



More Effective WITH Leadership

- ▶ Encourage expression of concerns
 - ▶ Try to deal with them
- ▶ Describe proposals as tentative
- ▶ Record ideas and suggestions from others
 - ▶ Build on them
 - ▶ Be tactful in expressing concerns on them
- ▶ Listen to others w/o defensiveness
- ▶ Appreciate input





On a day-by-day basis, what is the number one thing a leader does?

Decisions, Decisions

- ▶ Most all of LEADERSHIP comes down to decisions.

- ▶ IDENTIFY the DECISION:
 - **I decide**
 - **I decide with your input**
 - **We decide**
 - **You decide with my input**
 - **You decide**

- ▶ Examples





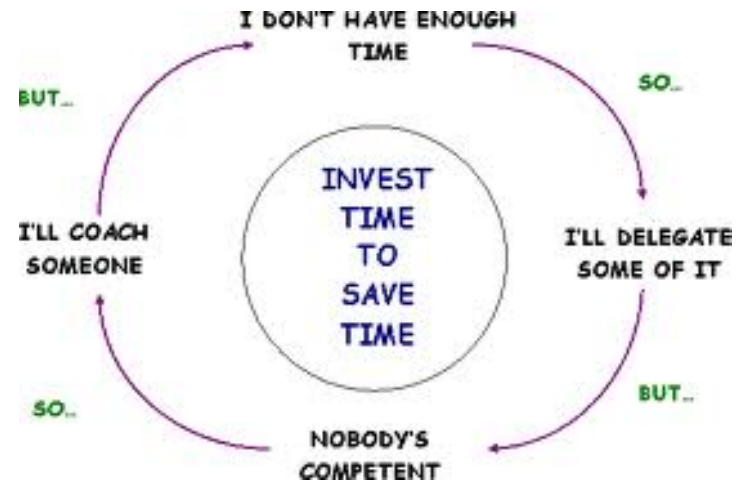
Why do YOU go back to (or stay in) the
TO window?

Or...why do OTHERS do it...?

Why we stay in the TO window- research

Gary Yukl, Leadership in Organizations, 2013

- ▶ Our need for power
- ▶ Insecurity
- ▶ Need for achievement
- ▶ Difficulty in forming relationships
- ▶ Lack of expertise in subordinates
- ▶ Attitude of subordinate
- ▶ Distrust of subordinate
- ▶ Laxness
- ▶ Ben Cohen – Ben and Jerry’s – *“It’s not natural to ask questions of employees when I know the answer, listen patiently when they say something that isn’t right or ask them for ideas when I am eager to express my own.”* (NOTE: He does believe in participative leadership!)



Ways to improve your WITH – and overcome the urge to go back to TO

▶ Delegate:

- ▶ Tasks a subordinate can do better
- ▶ Urgent but not high priority tasks
- ▶ Work relevant to sub's career
- ▶ Tasks w/appropriate difficulty – allow for success
- ▶ Pleasant AND unpleasant tasks
- ▶ Tasks not central to YOUR role



"Never delegate authority; delegate liability."



When you delegate:

- ▶ Be clear
- ▶ Give authority and limits
- ▶ Establish reporting protocol
- ▶ Be sure delegation has been accepted
- ▶ Inform others
- ▶ Monitor appropriately
- ▶ Get necessary info to subordinate
- ▶ Provide support
- ▶ Mistakes = learning



Quick Summary

- ▶ Benefits of Restorative Leadership – WITH – are supported by research in the field of Leadership.
- ▶ Restorative Leadership DOES NOT mean everything is decided by committee.
- ▶ “Appearance” of engagement IS NOT engagement!
- ▶ Agreeing on who makes the decision should not be overlooked!
- ▶ Delegation helps develop subordinates AND helps you overcome your personal obstacles to WITH.





Questions, concerns, comments, issues
or other?

Or: Oh, look at the time!

Parting Shots

- ▶ PowerPoint will be posted
- ▶ Contact me:
 - ▶ tfertal@lchsyeyes.org
 - ▶ Twitter - @tfert
 - ▶ LinkedIn – Tom Fertal
 - ▶ O – 717-509-0315
- ▶ Keep at it...
- ▶ Remember...



Being restorative is a **PROCESS**, not a **DESTINATION**...



“One does not simply become a Restorative Leader overnight... it takes a great deal of practice...”





FORUM

How Restorative Practices Made Me a High School Principal

BY THOMAS S. FERTAL

Tom Fertal is principal of Lancaster Catholic High School, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA. He is also a Master of Restorative Practices and Education candidate at the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) Graduate School, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

In the summer of 2008 I enrolled in my first restorative practices courses at the International Institute for Restorative Practices Graduate School in Bethlehem. I had just been named vice principal of student affairs at my high school. My major responsibility was student discipline.

As an administrator at a private, faith-based school, I had never been satisfied with the traditional system of detentions, suspensions and "Saturday school" in use at our school. I had long known that we needed an alternative to those traditional methods, but I hadn't known what they might be.

I had heard the term "restorative justice," but at the time I hadn't known much about it. A quick search on the internet had led me to the IIRP in Bethlehem, my old hometown, a mere 70 miles from my school!

As the school year began at my high school (and I continued my studies at the IIRP), I began to introduce restorative practices to the faculty. Although I was still in the early stages of my own education in restorative practices, I was able to focus on the basic philosophy of addressing behavior in terms of harm, reintegration and the social discipline window.¹ (See Figure 1.)

It was my plan to continue teaching and training the faculty in restorative practices as the year went on.

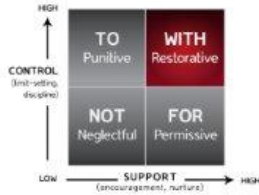


Figure 1. The Social Discipline Window

With the economic crisis striking our country at that time our school finished the year as many businesses and families had. We had a massive debt, and we did not have the resources to meet our financial obligations. As a result, there were pay cuts, layoffs and departmental budget cuts. Our principal retired, and I was named interim principal for the coming year. The phone call asking me to serve in this capacity came to me on the morning of the last day of school. I accepted.

I had now inherited a school in crisis. Morale amongst faculty was at an all-time low. They harbored ill will against the school board and the Diocese. They were saddened at the loss of colleagues. Parents were concerned about class sizes, changes to the courses of study and extracurricular activities and athletics. Alumni were concerned about how things had gotten so bad and wanted to know how things were going to be made better. The "laid-back" summer I had anticipated became the busiest I had ever had.

From the very beginning, I must say that the concepts I had learned at the IIRP showed their worth: Fair process,² functioning as a community and compassionate witnessing.³ All of these became

the tools I used in dealing with faculty, parents, board members and students.

I was implementing restorative practices in every aspect of my work, in that I directly involved people in matters that concerned them and gave everyone a voice. Open and honest communication was critical, as was transparent leadership. Faculty members were now involved in decisions that they had never been privy to before, such as creating an overall teacher pay scale and the decision to drop class rank. Collaboration with board members reached new levels. People wanted to be heard. People wanted to have a say. I listened to them and engaged them.

Here are just a few examples of how I have implemented restorative practices in my work as principal of Lancaster Catholic High School:

- I implemented an open-door policy for faculty, parents and students; I'm available to meet at any time for any reason.
- I used a consensus model of leadership within the administrative team, with each member having an equal voice in addressing the difficult decisions that we faced.
- I reorganized the administrative team to include a broader cross section of departments, and I provided minutes of administrative meetings to all faculty members.
- I directly involved faculty in deciding what to do about a 50 percent cut in extracurricular activity pay. The result pleased everyone, including the school's Finance Committee, not only because the process was



transparent, open and fair, but also because it actually saved money for the school.

- I met with particular constituent groups to hear their concerns about the current budget and the future of their respective programs, particularly the athletic and music departments. This included the paid staff in charge of each area, parents, alumni and students. This was extremely critical, as there was a perception that these two departments were not treated equally in the budget-cutting process.
- I shared detailed budget information with the entire staff on a regular basis and kept them informed of financial success and failures throughout the year. This helped them see the "big picture" of the finances and helped them to have greater ownership of the budget, while at the same time enabling them to speak intelligently with other constituents about what was going on.
- I assembled a "principal's roundtable" with some parents in order to tackle the difficult issue of tuition.
- When the school carnival was rained out and the athletic field was destroyed, I brought together all the major stakeholders who use the field to develop a plan on how to deal with the problem. Everyone was happy with the outcome.
- In a case of student-to-student sexual harassment, I assembled everyone who had been affected — students, teachers, parents — in a restorative conference, so that each person could talk about the impact the incident had on them and repair the harm that had been done. By the end of the conference, the fathers of the two students, who had been ready to come to blows, were hugging each other. Although I had always wanted to serve as a principal, I hadn't expected the

opportunity to come so soon. And although I felt I lacked some of the technical knowledge, I did feel confident that the bulk of the job involved dealing with people, a skill that I believed I possessed. In the end, it was the application of what I had learned at the IIRP that got me through that tumultuous year.

When the official notice of the principal position was posted, I applied. Although I was unsure of the adequacy of my credentials, I figured that the board members had the best data by which to evaluate me — a year serving as the interim principal. I had hoped that my approach to guiding the school through a year of crisis, using all of the above-mentioned restorative techniques, would give me a viable shot at the position. It most certainly did.

In April 2010, I was given the permanent assignment of principal. Throughout the process, board members repeatedly brought up my style of leadership. Faculty, parents and other constituents had written letters and signed petitions in support of my candidacy — all referencing things like openness, fairness and honesty.

All of this solidified my assessment that my selection rested solidly on the day-to-day application of restorative practices in my job. For this, I am eternally grateful to the IIRP for giving me the tools necessary to be an effective leader and an agent of change, but especially for enabling me to restore community in a previously disconnected school environment. Thanks to my studies at the IIRP, I am now a high school principal. ☺

Four-Day Summer Institute: Basic Restorative Processes, July 11-14, 2011. For all professionals, with a new option for school administrators that satisfies Pennsylvania Act 45 credits but is relevant to school administrators everywhere. See http://www.iirp.org/event_detail.php?event_id=NTU-

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. The Social Discipline Window illustrates the four basic approaches to maintaining social and behavioral norms — different combinations of high or low control and support: punitive, permissive, neglectful and restorative. The restorative approach, combining both high control and high support, does things *with* people, rather than to them or *for* them (IIRP, n.d.).
2. Fair process entails three basic principles: 1. Engagement—involving individuals in decisions that affect them by listening to their views and genuinely taking their opinions into account; 2. Explanation—explaining the reasoning behind a decision to everyone who has been involved or who is affected by it; 3. Expectation clearly—making sure that everyone clearly understands a decision and what is expected of them in the future" (IIRP, n.d.).
3. Compassionate witnessing "helps us recognize our shared humanity, restore our sense of common humanity when it falters, and block our dehumanizing others." (Weingarten, 2003).

REFERENCES

- IIRP. (n.d.) What is restorative practices? Retrieved from www.iirp.org/whatisirp.php
- Weingarten, K. 2003. Compassionate witnessing and the transformation of societal violence: how individuals can make a difference. Retrieved from www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/WeingartenCompassionateWitnessing.pdf

http://lancasteronline.com/article/local/245878_After-difficult-year--Lancaster-Catholic-High-School-community-ready-to-rally.html#ixzz2iBM8WTlh

Newspaper Article