

Using Restorative Practice
to Address Issues
in a Sporting Environment

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Deborah Wyatt

- Employed in Local Education Authority - Children's Services for almost 10 years

Working with Young Offenders in Referral and Restorative practice

3 years National FA Grassroots Respect Ambassador

Welfare Officer for youth football club

Facilitator of WWYP and AB workshops

John Boulton

- 33 Years in Special Ed.-15 years Head of Residential Special School
- IIRP Trainer since 2005
- Churchill Travel Award
- Facilitator of WWYP and Anti Bullying Workshops
- IIRP Director of Training and Consultancy

- originally approached to provide training in ‘bullying awareness’

- *young person to young person*

- *adult (official) to young person*

- *adult (parent*) to young person*

- *adult (parent*) to adult (officials and parents)*

*RTP – raging touchline parents

But then a bigger picture emerged.....

Issues and concerns

Grass roots football – run by volunteers

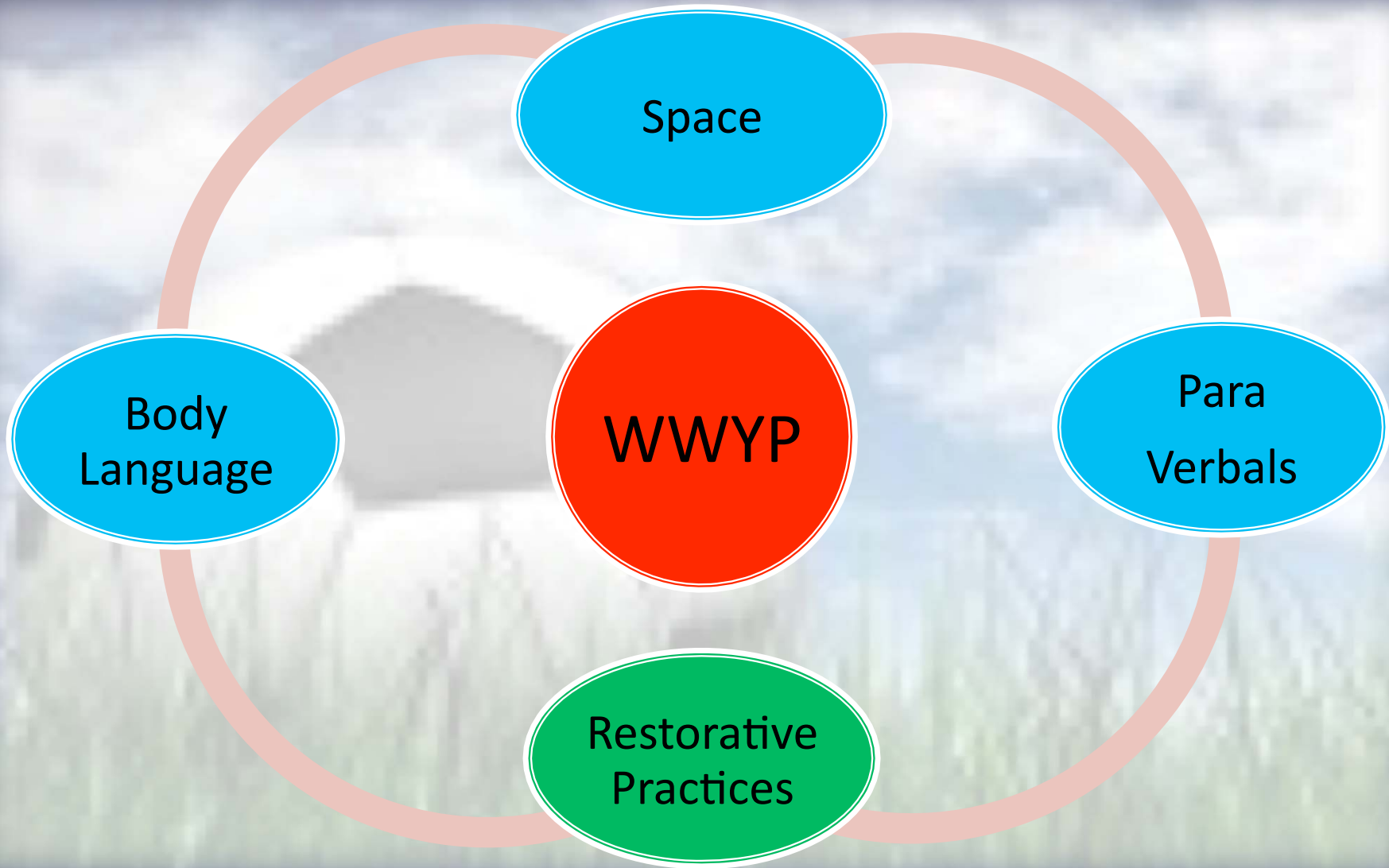
- *Many of the adults do not have a professional background of working with young people and / or...*
- *of working in a professional capacity with other people's children*

Clubs and leagues are becoming increasingly well structured

- *How to address issues and avoid difficult situations developing, is brought into sharp focus*

Some of what happens in clubs mirrors the professional game

- *The disciplinary system*
- *The position / authority of the manager*



Coaches, Team Managers and Club Officials

On and off the field, I will;

- Show respect to others involved in the game including match officials, opposition players, coaches, managers, officials and spectators
- Adhere to the laws and spirit of the game
- Promote Fair Play and high standards of behaviour
- Always respect the match official's decision
- Never enter the field of play without the referee's permission
- Never engage in public criticism of the match officials
- Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour

RP in RP

Never engage in, or tolerate, offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour

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Coaches, Team Managers and Club Officials

I understand that if I do not follow the Code, any/all of the following actions may be taken by my club, County FA or The FA

I may be;

- Required to meet with the club, league or County Welfare Officer
- Required to meet with the club committee
- Monitored by another club coach
- Required to attend a FA education course
- Suspended by the club from attending matches
- Suspended or fined by the County FA
- Required to leave or be sacked by the club
- In addition:
 - My FACA (FA Coaches Association) membership may be withdrawn

Cyber bullying in Football

-Is this Respectful?

NO!

-Is this happening in other areas of society?

YES!

Case notes...

- 15 year old referee abused on a Facebook page
- Social site grew and became more offensive
- Initially young people
- Within 3 days adults added comments
- 10 days later 85 members on this page..

- How do you fine 85 people?
- The clubs were at a loss
- We were approached....help!
- No history of the Restorative Approach
- Decided upon a training session that moved into the use of restorative questions
- 70 people attended, all of which were involved or affected..

How did RP engage these adults and YP?

- Acknowledgement of the 'problem' (harm caused)
 - Wrong doer accepted involvement
 - Engagement by all and emotions very evident
 - Light bulb moment for the trainers was ELECTRIC!
- Solution focus by all, especially the YP to actually do something about it back at their clubs and teams
 - Everyone was satisfied by the outcome..

Cyber bullying –Phil Green Vice-President, FC Bracknell

- *We were potentially facing a charge of Cyber bullying I was **not completely sure that I even understood the meaning of the word** never mind the potential repercussions!*
 - *On gathering my thoughts and quickly determining the size and further potential implications of Face book and other Global electronic mediums, I suggested to our secretary that we should seek help at the earliest possible opportunity from the League, County FA or if deemed necessary ,the Football association itself – **whatever, we needed to act swiftly and boldly.***
 - *FCB could not possibly have been the first football club involved in such an issue? Therefore, what had anybody learnt from previous incidents –or **was the answer to fine the guilty club as, too often in my view, is the case.***
- The (60) attendees were boys from the above team in question, parents, managers, coaches and club officials.*

*The course content was brilliant, enabling all parties of **all ages to contribute from the very start***

*Crucially, the course **addressed the issues head on with the boys concerned without causing any embarrassment or “pointing the finger”**. It also enabled them to see the repercussions of their actions, not only with the victim but also with the associated club members who had to spend time and effort in addressing the problems in the correct manner. It also highlighted the insurmountable problems that Cyber bullying can bring to the victim with the most horrible of conclusions in certain cases –suicide.*

the most satisfying outcome was that the boys in question were completely and absolutely in agreement that they would not indulge in such things again without very careful consideration to the content of any electronic dialogue.

Most importantly, this had been achieved, not by hefty fines or suspensions, but by positive Restorative Practice.

Amongst other members, there was a great admiration for these boys for attending and participating in such a positive manner.

The RP in RP

- Is very much work in progress in grassroots football
- Teams, clubs, Counties and the FA are taking more of a restorative approach, slowly but surely
- My mission to adapt the RP to RP is to support the understanding of engagement, explanation and expectation.