DEALING WITH BULLYING AND CONFLICT
WITH THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
Learning from the Ruiselede prison community (B.)

"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing
and rightdoing there is a field.
I'll meet you there"

Rumi (Persian poet, 13th century)

1. INTRODUCTION
2. RESTORING FREEDOM?
3. THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
4. CASE STUDY – RUISELEDE PRISON
5. CORNERSTONES FOR IMPLEMENTATION
6. EXERCISE
INTRODUCTION

- cooperation between practice and science:
  - prison of Ruiselede (near to Bruges, Belgium)
  - restorative pyramid ((Phd research J. Deklerck, 2005)
- process of cultural and structural change towards a "restorative prison"
- "changing lenses": restorative prison? school? community? ...
  - win for all
  - relationship with safety and security
  - relationship with reintegration in society
- from "deprivation of freedom" to "restoring freedom": an existential learning process

IIRP World Conference
Kortrijk, Belgium, 15-17 May 2019

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johan.deklerck@gmail.com  &  hannelore.pintelon@cawnoordwestvlaanderen.be
EXISTENTIAL ETHICS

* gesto de amor
* winner publicity Cannes, 2006

ONE EXISTENTIAL ETHICS, TWO EXPRESSIONS

EXTERNALIST ETHICS  
INTERNALIST ETHICS

self regulating ethical power
EXISTENTIAL ETHICAL ROOTS
A DOUBLE ANSWER TO CONFLICTS / CRIME

heteronomous part of life
EXTERNALIST ETHICS

autonomous part of life
INTERNALIST ETHICS

APPLYING THE LAW
(penal) justice system

RESTORING FREEDOM
restorative justice
mediation

self regulating ethical force
EXISTENTIAL ETHICS

* complementary relationship: different outcomes
* subsidiarity: first 'freedom'

johan.deklerck@gmail.com

A DOUBLE ANSWER TO CONFLICTS / CRIME

* restoring material, emotional, existential FREEDOM
  . autonomous life sphere
  . internalist ethics

* doing JUSTICE
  . heteronomous life sphere
  . externalist ethics

-> MEDIATION AND RJ: restoring freedom
-> common source: EXISTENTIAL ETHICS

johan.deklerck@gmail.com
A DOUBLE ANSWER TO CONFLICTS / CRIME

- the redress of material, emotional and existential freedom: flow of life, human relations, internalist ethics
- doing justice: norms of society, punishment, externalist ethics
- common source: existential ethics
- always two answers
- these answers complement each other
- they cannot replace each other
- mediation, RJ, RP: restoring freedom

A DOUBLE ANSWER TO CONFLICT / CRIME

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johan.deklerck@gmail.com
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johan.deklerck@gmail.com & hannelore.pintelon@cawoordwestvlaanderen.be

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
framework for a fundamental redress

(Deklerck, 2005, IV, 277-288)
STARTING POINT

• a prison can be different

• redress as a central goal and starting point for the organization of prison

• imprisonment should be seen not as a 'goal' but as a 'means' for enlarging freedom

• prison as a supporting frame

• the ‘restorative pyramid’ as a framework

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
framework for a fundamental redress

(Deklerck, 2005, IV, 277-288)
THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID framework for a fundamental redress (2)

- redress is far more than mediation or conflict management
- restorative work is also about the broader context
- a restorative culture can be a basic culture in prison, schools, organisations, business, neighbourhoods, ...
- the restorative pyramid:
  - enlarges and orientates: "thinking larger"
  - goes to the foundations of restorative work and society
  - incorporates the underlying aspects
  - brings order in the many possibilities

(Deklerck, 2005, IV, 277-288)
THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
level 4: primary redress -> facts

- “primary”: focus on the conflict, the criminal act, the problem, ...

EXAMPLES:
- “say sorry”, a handshake, “forgotten and forgiven”
- mediation, group conferencing, ...
- financial compensation
- ritual, alone or with the parties involved:
  - a drawing becomes a paper boat that drifts away on the river or a ball of paper for the fire
  - poem, bringing flowers, sending a card, writing letter to the other party,
  - burn the object of the offense, tear-up photos, burning a candle, a prayer or confession, washing and purifying
- make concrete arrangements about how to proceed

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
framework for a fundamental redress

(Deklerck, 2005, IV, 277-288)
DE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
level 3: secondary redress -> person, flow of life

- “secondary”:
  - facts are no longer the central focus, but the larger background
  - focus on the “person”, his social network, the larger circumstances
- stop in one’s flow of life: material, emotional and existential redress
- no chronological order between ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ redress

EXAMPLES
- working on distorted relationships, deprivation, poverty, social reintegration, debt mediation
- working on problematic family relationships and negative group dynamics
- therapy, assistance, withdrawal of alcohol an drugs,
- learning to cope with aggression, fear, frustration, authority, ...

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID framework for a fundamental redress

(Deklerck, 2005, IV, 277-288)
THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
level 2: redress

• positive orientation: initiatives with a non problematic focus, with a positive ambition, from the restorative perspective
• should help those involved to function better with themselves, their social and family environment
• aimed at improving the quality of life: problems and redress of level 3 and 4 as a background for choices on this level

• EXAMPLES
  training social skills, learning working skills, learning to work in structured settings, learning to apply, relaxation and autogenic training, communication training or relationship building, differences between man and woman, sexuality, interculturality and diversity, learning to speak in groups, non-violent resilience, assertiveness training, ...

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID framework for a fundamental redress

(Deklerck, 2005, IV, 277-288)
THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
level 1: stimulating the general quality of life

- improving daily life: learning to live
- Foundation for initiatives on level 4, 3 and 2 (more specific skills and competences)
- the basis of “the good life”
- 10 orthopedagogical basic forms of human dialogue (W. Ter Horst, 1988):
  - eat, drink, talk, touch, care, learn, play, work, celebrate, travel”
  - seems obvious, but is often absent or tricky in the prison context (and the former home situation of many prisoners)

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
framework for a fundamental redress

(Deklerck, 2005, IV, 277-288)
THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID

further explanation (1)

• four + one levels:
  o level 4: repairing the damage problem oriented: - orientation
  o level 3: ‘personal’ redress problem oriented: - orientation
  o level 2: specific context positively oriented: + orientation
  o level 1: general context positively oriented: + orientation

• level 0: conditioning context: broader society, has an impact on restorative (policy) possibilities:
  eg. the openness to restorative practice, personnel framework, safety discourse, regional and central politics, larger sociological developments

• redress feedback: levels learn from each other and adjust:
  eg. therapeutic needs (3) from restorative encounters (4);
  restorative support needs (2) from ‘flow of life’-stories (3)

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID

further explanation (2)

• instrumental and fundamental redress:
  . vertical spit of the restorative pyramid
  . on all levels: 1 till 4
  . level 3 & 4: redress
  . level 1 & 2: redress as a larger learning- and developmental process

• instrumental redress and learning:
  bv. job, administration, housing, computer, languages, etc.

• fundamental or existential redress and learning:
  bv. meaning of life, relations, friendship, man-woman, children, healing, etc.
THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID

further explanation (3)

- integral approach

- family, school, education, organisations, prison are the framework for those processes

- existential (re-)integration as starting point and final goal:
  - outside: society, social environment, ...
  - inside: myself, personal development

THE RESTORATIVE PYRAMID
framework for a fundamental redress

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johan.deklerck@gmail.com
FUNDAMENTAL REDRESS
or: growing in existential freedom

REDRESS, ... expresses itself in a growing freedom on a material, psychic and existential level, which can be reduced as a consequence of the delinquent act in a different degree within the different parties involved.

FUNDAMENTAL REDRESS, ... means that as many elements as possible, which have lead to the delinquent act, such as experiences of victimisation of the offender, aggression provoking attitudes of the victim, and/or criminogenic factors in the environment, are taken into account, in order to contribute to a deeper, existential redress, which means to be connected (again) and fully with one's flow of life.


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FUNDAMENTAL REDRESS
or: growing in existential freedom (2)

- large definition:
  - not reduced to ‘restorative justice’,
  - not reduced to mediation or specific restorative practices
- in essence: redress of freedom
- facts, person and environment
- integration of micro, meso, macro
- sociological and psychological perspective
- integration of punishment

johan.deklerck@gmail.com
INTRODUCTION

- CAW Noord-West-Vlaanderen – Generic Social Work Center
- Social work services for prisoners and their families
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
Prisons in Belgium

- 35 prisons – 17 Flanders
- 10,305 inmates (January 2019)
- Ruiselede: Atypical - small prison farm with open regime

CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
description of the prison

- Who lives here?
  - 60 inmates – 250 cows
  - Profile: low risk of escape, 60% drug related crimes and 20% sex crimes
- Who works here?
  - Federal justice department: 54,5 FTE prison staff: prison officers, social work, management and administration
  - NGO, financed by the Flemish Public Administration: social work, education, pre-therapy, sport, work...: 5,78 FTE
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
Characteristics of the prison 1

- Focus on "rehabilitation and education"
- 5 pillars:
  - Work
  - Drug & medication free

CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
Characteristics of the prison 2

- Communal living
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
Characteristics of the prison 3

- Family & social network
- Innovative projects

CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 1

- Autumn 2017: multiple bullying incidents
- Shared concern amongst staff, prisoners and visitors
- How can we address this effectively?
- The traditional/punitive approach doesn’t help contain the problem
- The restorative pyramid: framework for a restorative approach

johan.deklerck@gmail.com
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 2: Framework

- January 2018: work group established
- Aim: developing an anti-bullying policy for dealing with bullying in a restorative way
- Profile of the participants:
  - Acknowledgement of the problem
  - Enthusiastic
  - Motivated
  - Diversity

CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 3: The process

- At the beginning: monthly meetings (3)
- Establishing ground rules
  - Open and learning environment
  - Freedom of speech
  - Commitment
- Provide clear information
  - On the subject (bullying)
  - Theoretical frameworks – The restorative pyramid

johan.deklerck@gmail.com
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 4

- Goal: developing a working method to deal with bullying
- Starting at the top of the pyramid – 4th level

CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 5

- The restorative approach based on
  - Accountability
  - Involvement
  - Support
  - Repairing harm
  - Justice

- How?
  - Case studies
  - Focus on learning from and with each other
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 6: How it was

CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 7: New flow chart

Social workers and psychologists
- Listening to the involved
- Offer support
- Focus on accountability, repair of the harm and of repair of the relationship

Governor
Specific measures

johan.deklerck@gmail.com
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
the bullying project 8: Where are we now?

• Meetings every 6 to 8 weeks
• Implementing flow chart - Case studies
• Wider communication
• What about the other levels of the pyramid?

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johan.deklereck@gmail.com & hannelore.pintelon@cawoordwestvlaanderen.be
CASE STUDY - RUISELEDE
cornerstones for implementation

1. Starting point is shared concern, problem, question, dilemma...
2. Ensure the support of the management in your organization
3. Engage all the stakeholders and don’t forget the critical thinkers.
4. Ground rules to establish an open and learning environment
5. Provide knowledge: background information concerning the topic, theoretical frameworks – explain the restorative pyramid
6. Restorative pyramid: choose the level based on the needs
7. Be specific - small successes: applicable and visible in practice.
8. Don’t force the process, seize opportunities to address other levels of the pyramid
9. Ensure continuity
10. Don’t give up, even when it gets tough. It is worth it!

Good Luck

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EXERCISE:
the restorative pyramid in your environment?

• Start **individually** to fill in the blanco pyramid:
  o choose your environment: job, school, centre, neighbourhood, club, ...
    ▪ **what are you already doing at the different levels?** (left half)
    ▪ **what don’t you do, but could you do?** (right half)
  o try to write one or more ideas on every level

• Form a **group of 3 persons**:
  o every one presents his "home work"
  o share experiences and learn from each other
  o complete, adapt your "home work"
  o active participation of every group member

• Back to **plenary**: we share our experiences
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johan.deklerck@gmail.com & hannelore.pintelon@cawnoordwestvlaanderen.be

MORE INFORMATION?

Feel free to contact:

• PRISON:
hannelore.pintelon@cawnoordwestvlaanderen.be

• RESTORATIVE PYRAMID:
Johan.deklerck@gmail.com
www.johandeklerck.be
www.sorrybox.be/herstelpiramid (Dutch)
johan.deklerck@gmail.com