

*‘Developing Restorative Communities’
Seventh International Conference on
Conferencing, Circles and other Restorative
Practices.*

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*‘The Key to Effective Implementation of
Restorative Practices in Schools’*

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Presentation Outline

- Brief history
- Understanding the need for Restorative [Justice] Practice in schools.
- Restorative Practice Framework
- Results to date
- Practice Implications

Why Restorative Practice?

- Why is your school interested in Restorative Practice?
- Tell me about your present practice - what works and what are the challenges?
- What [practice] void are you trying to fill with Restorative Practice?

What This Reveals

Teachers often:

- Have difficulty in explaining their own practice.
- Don't think a great deal about what [practice] works.
- Look for a quick fix for problematic students.
- Get frustrated and resort to punitive measures for the most challenging students.
- View student compliance as 'an end in itself'.
- See Restorative Practice as yet another program.

What Would Teachers Say?

As a simple exercise we ask teachers to think about what they would say to parents who ask them the following questions:

- “What is your school like?”
- “What does it have to offer our children?”
- “How do you challenge students who have done the wrong thing so that they can reflect on their behaviour, yet still feel okay about you and themselves?”
- “What things help you to control students but still enable them to learn and enjoy their school experience?”

In other words, we are asking teachers to explain the rationale for their practice and they generally do poorly at this.

What Would Parents Say?

We then ask teachers what answers parents would give to the following questions:

- “What is your school like?”
- “What do you think makes your school what it is?”
- “How do you challenge students so that they will look at their behaviour but still feel okay about themselves and you? “
- “What is the key to controlling students so they can learn something but still enjoy the experience?”

Teachers generally believe that parents will struggle to answer these questions for a number of reasons. It is rare for teachers to say ‘we don’t really explain our practice rationale’.

What Would Students Say?

We then ask teachers to explain what answers students give to the following questions:

- “How do teachers respond when you do the wrong thing?”
- “What things help make this an okay experience for you?”
- “What is the teacher saying about you and your behaviour?”
- “What would a bad experience with a teacher be like?”
- “What are those teachers you respect really good at?”

Teachers comment that most students would be able to give an answer these questions. Teachers however say that students would struggle if asked about the thinking [rationale] behind the practice teachers use.

Existing Practice

We finally ask teachers:

- What are some of the reasons behind why you [teachers], parents and students would struggle to adequately answer these questions?
- What are the practice implications if most teachers struggle to explain the rationale for their own practice - what they do, why they do that and how they know it works?
- How important is it that parents and students share some understanding of the rationale for teacher practice?
- What would the benefits be if teachers, parents and students shared a common understanding on language and practice?

Possible Key To Effective Implementation

The possible key to effective implementation of Restorative Practice in a school communities is to be found in the provision of an **explicit practice** framework that:

- Offers a common language and practice
- Is easily understood by teachers, parents and students
- Is capable of fostering healthy relationships
- Views aberrant behaviour as an opportunity for learning
- Works and is easily validated

Socratic Engagement Style

What have you noticed about our presentation to this point?

What is meant by a ‘Socratic’ engagement style?

“Socrates was a Greek thinker and teacher. He held no classes and gave no lectures and wrote no books. He simply asked questions. When he got his answer he asked more questions. Socrates asked questions in order to make people think about ideas they took for granted.”

Socratic Exercise

John is a student who has thrown a book in class and hit Mary in the face. You have asked him to leave the room and you speak to him at the completion of class.

Telling Exercise

This involves you explaining to John your thoughts about the impact of his behaviour and any consequences you think are needed.

Asking Exercise

This involves you discussing the same concerns but on this occasion you ask questions only.

What would be the difference between the two conversations?

Building An Explicit Practice Framework

Let us now explore how our Restorative Practice framework can provide explicit practice capable of building healthier relationships and stronger school communities.

What Are Trying To Change?

Our Restorative Story

*Mary Finds
Some Money*

Today's Restorative Story

What helped this story have a happy ending or as you will hear today, a restorative ending?

If Mary had just been punished and nothing else had happened, what sort of ending would it have been?

Main Presentation Elements

- Restorative Definition
- Values
- Social Discipline Window
- Fair Process
- Restorative Questions
- Theory
- Practice

Defining Restorative

BASIC TENETS OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE (PRACTICE)

“Harm and Relationships”

Adversarial (Blame) approach:

“what happened, who is to blame, what punishment or sanction is needed?”

Restorative approach:

“what happened, what harm has resulted and what needs to happen to make things right?”

Adversarial

Focus is in the past

Preoccupied with blame

Deterrence linked to punishment

Restorative

Focus in past, present & future

Emphasis on resulting harm

Deterrence linked to relationships and personal accountability

‘For punishment and sanctions to be effective (in changing behaviours), they need to be delivered in a context that provides both meaning and relevance’.

Building An Explicit Practice Framework

Let us now explore how our restorative practice framework can provide explicit practice capable of building healthier relationships and stronger school communities.

Personal and Professional Values

Reflecting Values in Practice

“John is leaving the school for the last time. As he walks through the front gate, he stops and stares momentarily back at the school.”

Reflecting Values in Practice

- What would you like John to say about his experience at the school?
- What would you like John to take from this experience?
- Describe the impact you (personally) would like to have on John?

Those We Respect

They had the following qualities:

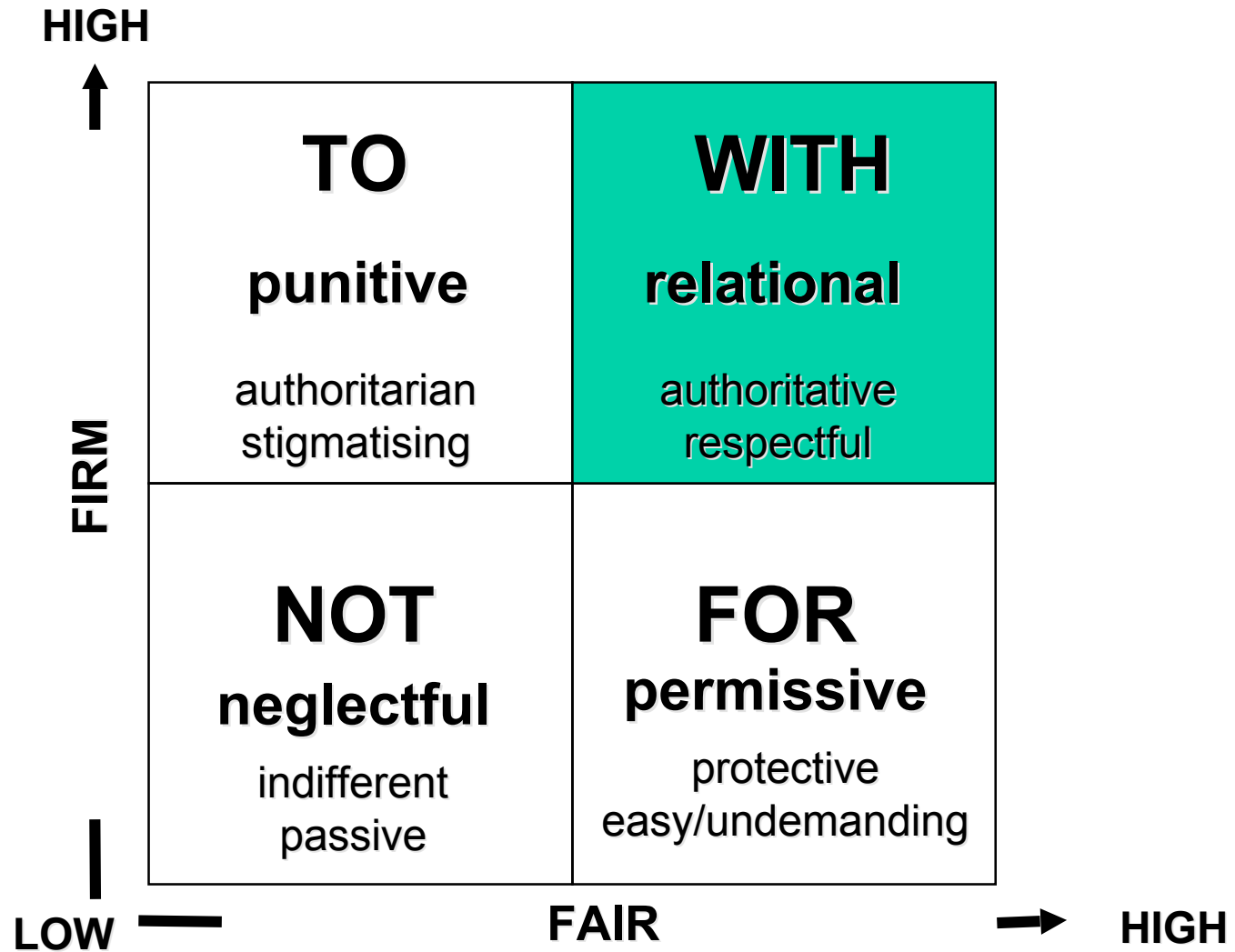
- Listened
- Empathised
- Honest/integrity
- Open
- Respectful
- Showed interest
- Made time
- Firm and Fair
- Encouraging
- Challenging
- Set clear boundaries
- Non judgemental
- Accepting
- Believed in you
- Used humour & were fun
- Created learning environment
- Affirming
- Apologised - vulnerable
- Were real
- Shared their story
- Loving
- Compassionate
- Consistent
- Explained their actions
- Realistic
- Predictable

Social Discipline Window

How We Are Treated

What is your experience if someone is:

1. firm but not fair.
2. fair but not firm.
3. who was neither firm nor fair.
4. who was consistently firm and fair.



Adapted from Social Discipline Window - Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel - 2000

Teaching Styles

What box would you be operating in if you said to a student:

- *Sit down and shut up you!*
- *You really only have to do it if it suits you.*
- *I don't care what you do, sort it out yourself!*
- *You are generally pretty good students, but I am disappointed in how you behaved.*

Fair Process

I know I will always be treated

“ ”

by those I respect.

INSERT THE WORD WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR
EXPECTATION

Most say ‘fairly’

What is ‘Fair Process’?

What is more important, process or
outcomes?

When is someone likely to accept an
outcome she/he does not like?

Fair Process

The Central Idea...

‘....students are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems - whether they themselves win or lose by those systems - when fair process is observed.’

Fair Process

When someone says ‘that’s not fair’ what are they meaning?

What needs to happen for fair process to be experienced?

Clue:

Think of an experience in which you felt you were treated unfairly. What was missing or was needed to make it a ‘fair’ experience.

Principles of Fair Process

Engagement:

Involving students by asking for their input so they can tell their story.

Explanation :

Everyone involved and affected should understand why final decisions are made as they are.

Expectation Clarity:

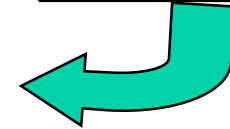
Once decisions are made, new rules are clearly stated, so that students understand what is expected.

OPERATING DOMAINS

Pressure

TO	WITH Fair Process
NOT	FOR

How can you practice consistently in this domain?



Support

Restorative Questions

Restorative Questions 1

When challenging behaviour, why would the following questions consistently achieve ‘fair process’?:

- **What happened?**
- **What were you thinking at the time?**
- **What have you thought about since?**
- **Who has been affected by what you did?**
- **In what way?**
- **What do you think you need to do to make things right?**

Restorative Questions 11

Why would these questions assist, those harmed by other's actions, experience 'fair process?':

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?**
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?**
- What has been the hardest thing for you?**
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?**

Theory

Reintegrative Shaming

John Braithwaite suggest shame is innate, and is experienced in two ways:

Internal

- Socialisation
- Ability to decide between right & wrong
- Conscience

External

- Through sanctions or condemnation from family or significant others.

Braithwaite's Hypothesis

'Where individual wrong doers are confronted (SHAMED) within a continuum of respect and support, then a process of REINTEGRATION can begin'.

Braithwaite's Hypothesis

ALLOWS:

The act (unacceptable behaviours) to be rejected because they failed to reach expectations or standards

WHILST:

Acknowledging the intrinsic worth of the person and their potential contribution to society.

“I still like you but I don't like your behaviour”

Psychology of Affects

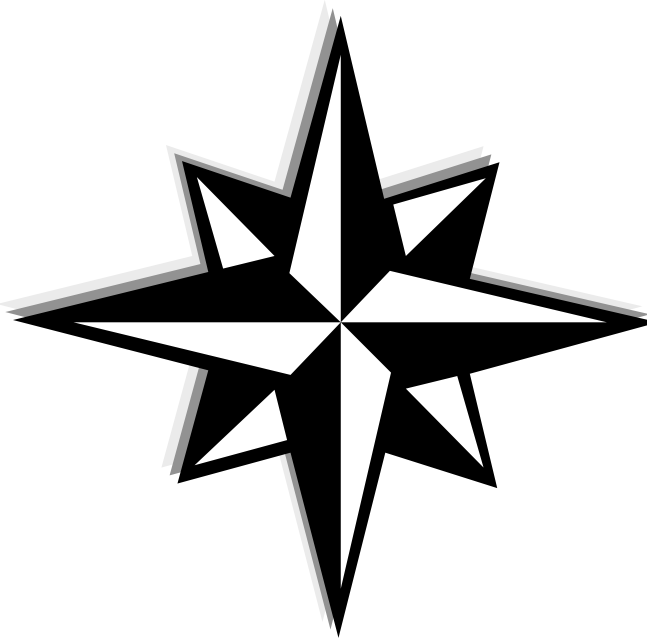
Shame Experiences

- Describe what experiencing shame is like. What happens to you?
- Describe how you would respond in a positive way?
- Describe negative ways of dealing with shame?

Nathanson's Compass Of Shame

WITHDRAWAL

ATTACK OTHERS



ATTACK SELF

AVOIDANCE

Acting In Unhelpful Ways To Shame

WITHDRAWAL : do not want to talk to anyone.

AVOIDANCE : deny that anything happened;
do distracting things.

HURT OTHERS: get angry or blame/hurt
others

BLAME YOURSELF:you tell yourself you are
no good at anything - you
don't like yourself

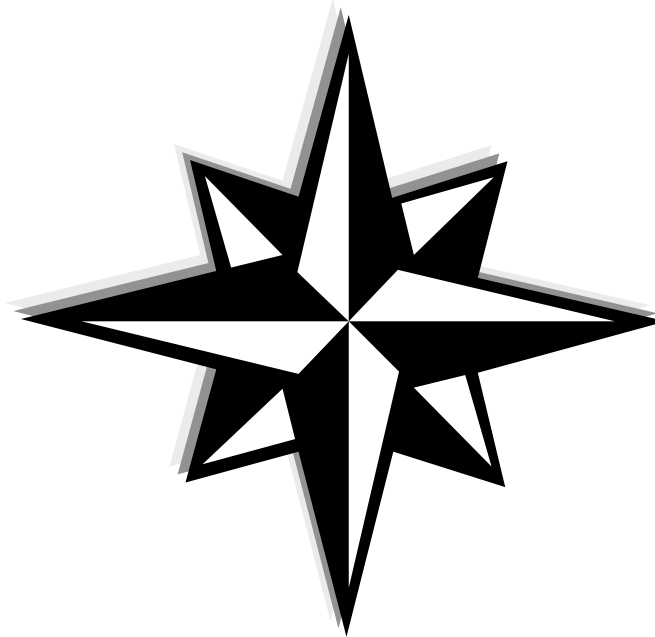


Bullying & Shame

What are some of the reasons why people bully others? How do bullies behave?

WITHDRAWAL

**HURT
OTHERS**



**BLAME
THEMSELVES**

AVOIDANCE

Silvan Tomkins' Nine Affects

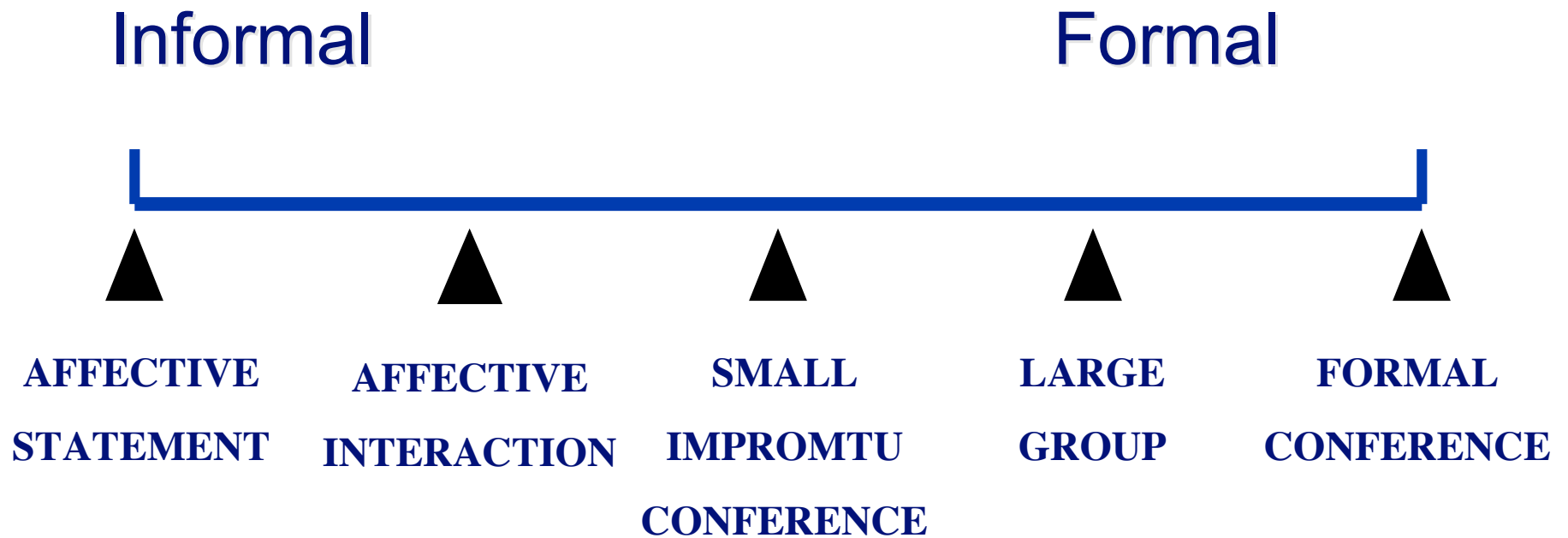


Community happens when students agree to:

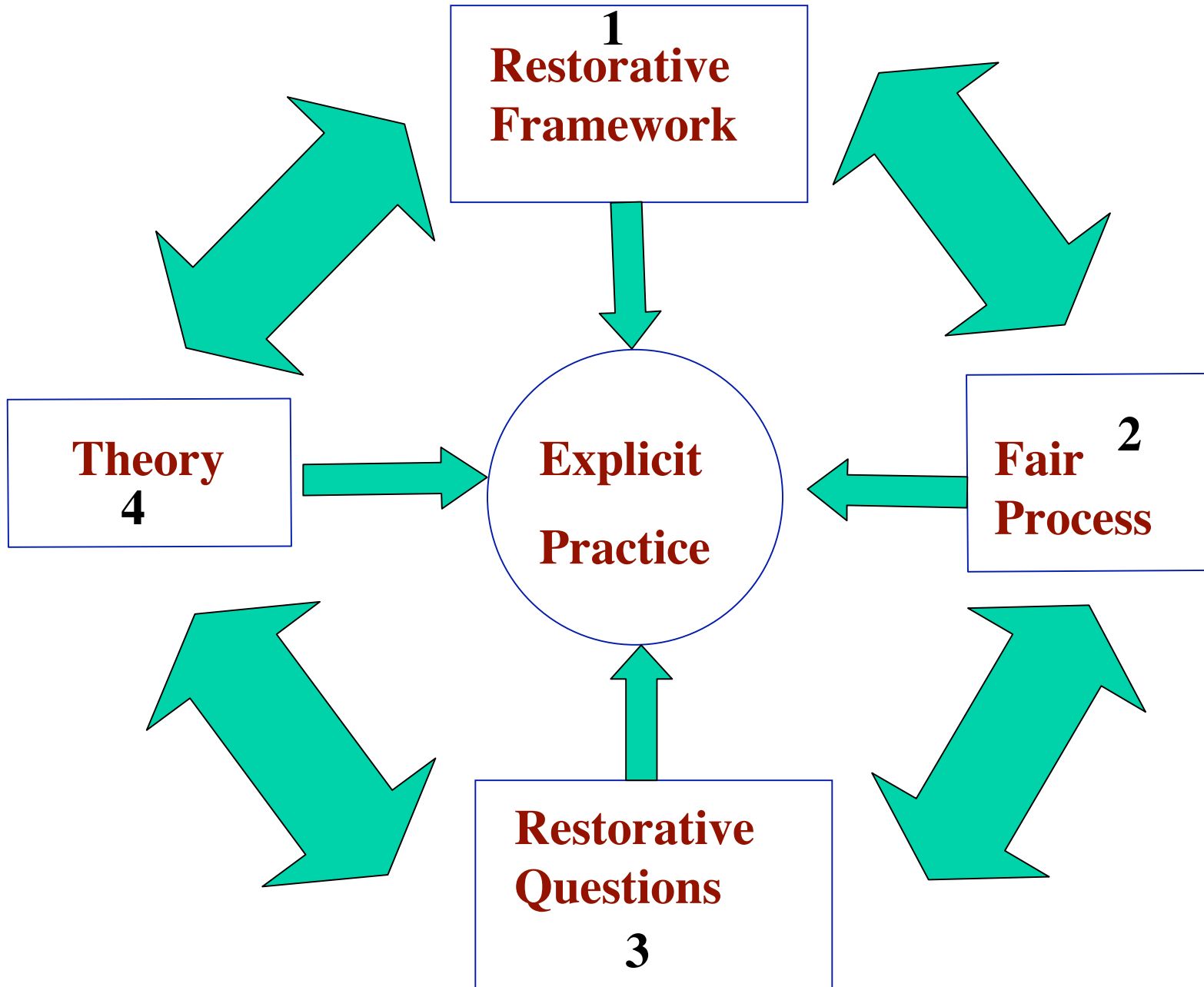
- * Maximise positive affect [listening and acknowledging]
- * Minimise negative affect [affirming]
- * Freely express emotion [story telling]
- * Do as much of the above three as possible

Practice

Restorative Practice Continuum



Linking Practice, Theory & Values



Restorative School Community

What could you expect to see happening in a Restorative school community in the following areas:

classroom

playground

teacher/parent meetings

staffroom

- Explicit framework provides a common language for staff to engage in professional dialogue and consistency of teacher judgement
- An inclusive philosophy which encourages relationship-building and an emphasis on doing things 'with' children as opposed to 'to', 'not' or 'for' them
- Teachers and peers become transition people who take children from the thinking of the past to the present and give them hope for the future
- Assists staff to practise the use of Socratic questions in promoting higher order thinking skills as advocated in the Quality Teaching document
- Our mid year meeting with parents is a student-led 3 way conference with parents, teacher and child sitting in a circle with the child taking responsibility for the celebrations and the areas for further development in behaviour and learning⁵³

- Whole school approach involving all stakeholders ensures consistency, a common language from home and school and sustainability of the practice
- The practice of using Socratic questions promotes cooperative learning and self-governance in both behaviour and learning
- Blame is taken out of the equation as the school focuses on a system based on acknowledgement and logical consequences as opposed to one based on rewards and punishment
- Resolution to suspension meetings ensure any shame felt in the process is reintegrative as opposed to stigmatising as children are welcomed back into their school community
- Children develop the ability to be self-directed in regards to their learning and behaviour
- Builds capacity and the school community's collective effectiveness to handle its own issues⁵⁴

Outcomes

- Children are willing to accept responsibility for their actions cognisant of the fact there will be a fair, firm process
- Children do not feel the need to fabricate lies as they know they will have the chance to tell their story, be able to make things right, repair any harm done and rebuild relationships
- Teachers and students are empowered to resolve issues in the classroom, the corridor and the playground negating the need for all incidents to be referred to executive and principal.
- A listening community is created and thus an affirmation or validation of the individual's self-worth occurs
- The question palm cards, sandwich board and other visuals around the school and in the newsletter provide a constant reminder of the framework for all
- The foundation of Restorative Practice is cemented by the listening created in other circle programs such as HIP⁵⁵
Bounce Back