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*The Ongoing Challenge of Introducing Restorative Practice in
Canadian and Australian School Systems*

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Summary

- Rationale behind ‘framework’ presentation
- Collaboration began in 2004
- Canadian Developments
- Australian Developments - parallel experiences
- Brief explanation of the Framework
- Change and Difference
- What we have learned

Rationale For 'Framework Training'

- Introduced restorative conferences to schools in 1991.
- Provided facilitator training for teachers 1991-95
- 1995 - Lewisham Primary School - focus shifted from formal to informal processes and involvement of all teachers.
- Development of one-day teacher training with an emphasis on explicit practice.

Rationale For 'Framework Training'

- 2003 - Mary MacKillop Primary Penrith [NSW] - developed a 'whole school approach' by training teachers, students and parents.
- Subsequently refined training, shift in focus from behaviors to relationships and linking Restorative Practice to sound pedagogy [teaching and learning].

Comment:

My thinking was to challenge teachers around explicit practice and the importance of engaging in regular, constructive and reflective conversations on what works
The framework helped this to happen.

Collaboration began in 2004

Canadian Development:

- Initial pilot in Kawartha/Pine Ridge District School Board
- Whole school Board implementation
- Subsequent and more recent developments
- Extensive work with a variety of school districts over the past 18 months including Durham District School Board, Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario and the Keewatin-Patricia District School Board
- Development in other provinces

Australian Developments - Parallel Experiences

- Large number of school trainings conducted throughout Australia since 2005.
- Most school training take place over two days.
- Usual schedule involves:
 - one-day teachers and all staff
 - two hours with administrators
 - 90 minute parent sessions
 - primary [elementary] students range from 35 to 60 minutes.
 - secondary students - 60 minute session
 - teacher followup - 90 minutes.
- Close collaboration with Rozelle Public School.

Our Restorative Practice Framework

Basic Concepts:

- Good relationships are the basis for learning.
- Anything that affects relationships [such as inappropriate behaviour] impacts on learning.
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour needs to be experienced as an opportunity for learning.



REALJUSTICE.

Our Restorative Practice Framework

- Utilizes a philosophy and practices that strengthens relationships and fosters a healthy school community
- Is a rigorous practice framework that involves teachers, students and parents, engaging them in a collaborative approach
- acknowledges that the great majority of existing practice is effective and generally works and builds on that practice

Our Restorative Practice Framework

- is not a program; nor is it principally about skill enhancement
- offers an explicit framework to help identify practices that work and provide an opportunity for everyone to use this practice in more consistent and deliberate ways
- Is firm and fair, incorporating fair process



REALJUSTICE.

Our Restorative Practice Framework

The Aim of Restorative Practice Schools of
*“strengthening relationships and
managing conflict and tensions by repairing harm,
as way of developing and sustaining community”
creates safer schools and enhances student
learning*

REAL JUSTICE.



Adversarial **And** **Restorative**

Focus is in the past

Focus in past, present & future

Preoccupied with blame

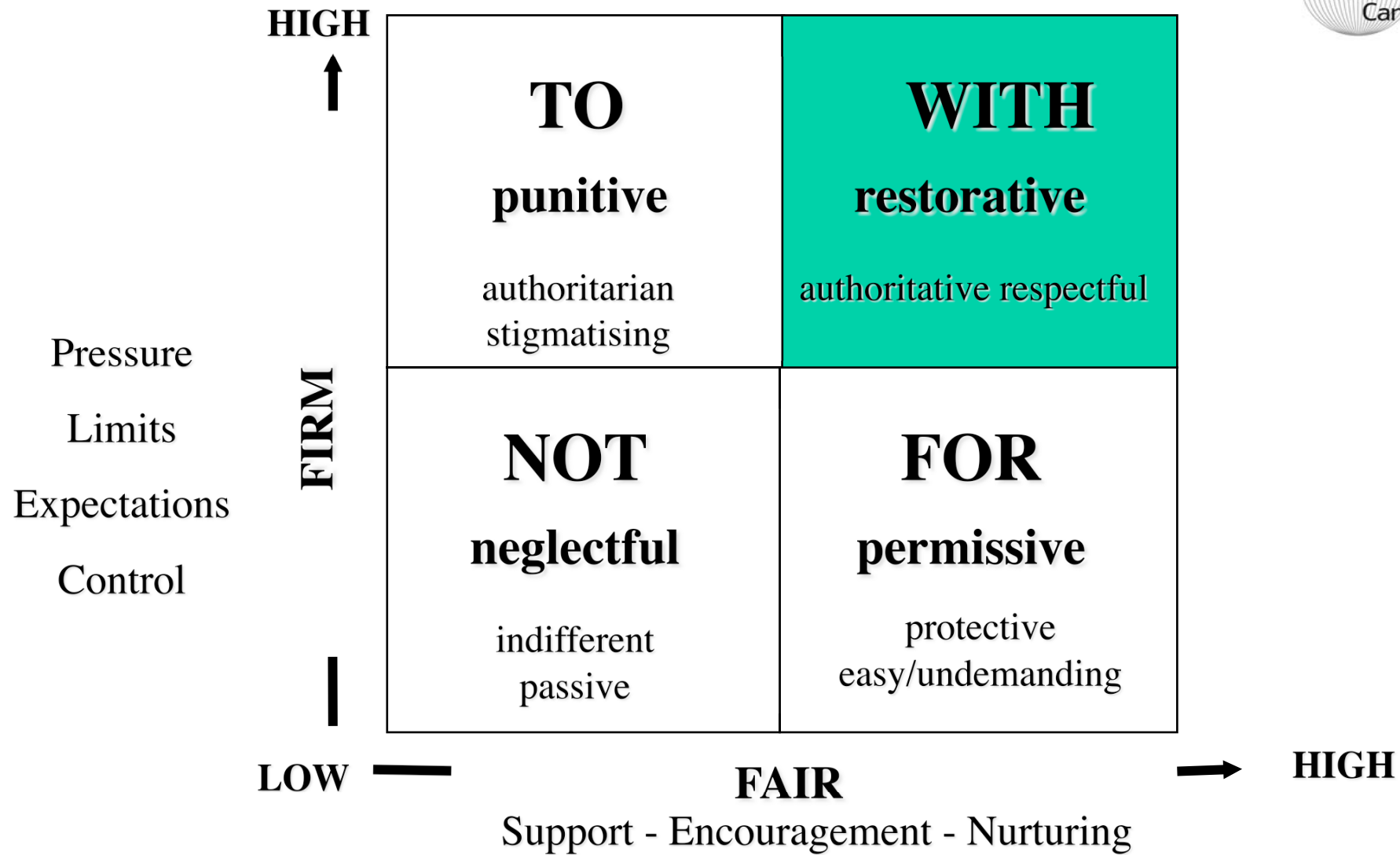
Emphasis on resulting harm

**Deterrence linked to
punishment**

Deterrence linked to
relationships and personal
accountability

*‘Consequences are an important part of Restorative Practice.
They need to involve dialogue and respectful challenge.’*

PRACTICE DOMAINS



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



Fair Process Principles

REAL JUSTICE.

- 1. Engagement** - Opportunity to have a say
- 2. Explanation**- Understand the reasons for the decision
- 3. Expectation Clarity** - Shared understanding on what is expected in terms of behaviour and rules

Kim & Mauborgne, Harvard Business Review, July – August 1997

The Restorative Questions

Restorative Questions I

- 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?



REALJUSTICE.

The Restorative Questions

Restorative Questions II

- 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?

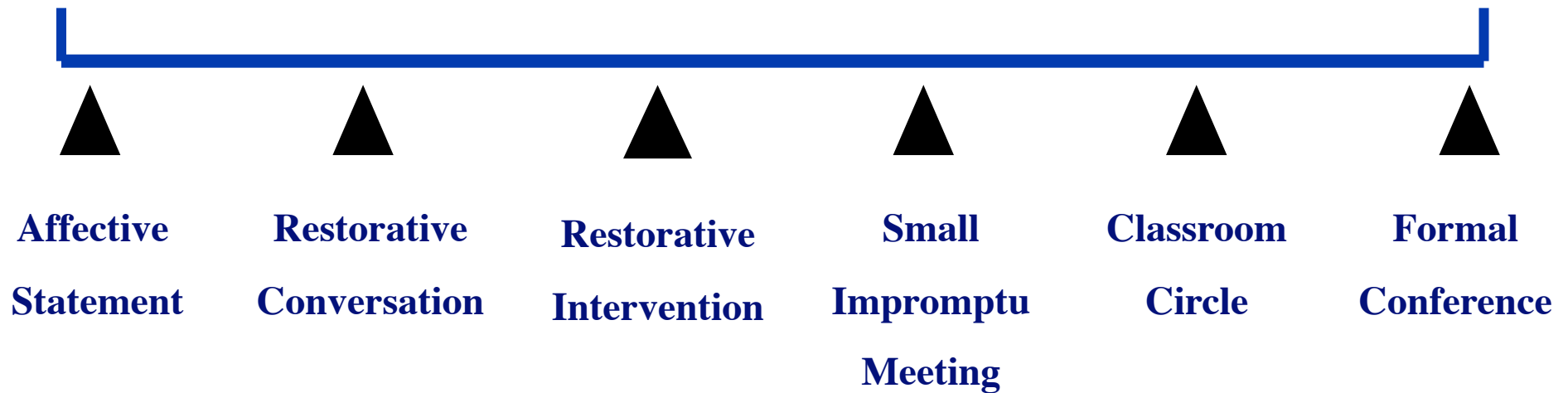


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Restorative Practice Continuum

Informal

Formal



Change and Difference

What Teachers Say:

- I am much more conscious about my practice.
- I have learned to be a better listener.
- Being a facilitator of dialogue by using the questions has made it far easier.
- I have learned to be more explicit in my practice.
- The framework has affirmed the things I do well and importantly helps you to more easily recognise your bad habits.



Change and Difference

What Teachers Say:

- The biggest change is that I have learned is how to give student the opportunity to sort things. In the past I expected students to take responsibility but now realise that I have to provide the rituals.
- The quality of the conversations I have with my colleagues are more positive as we are using a common language and practice.
- I no longer ask ‘why’ questions.
- I feel more confident and certainly more consistent in how I interact with students.
- As a staff we have become better at celebrating what we do well.

Change and Difference

What Students Say:

- I am better able to work things out with my class mates.
- I have learned the questions and this has helped me at home.
- We get to work things out when something happens.
- We are more prepared to accept responsibility when we do something wrong because we know we will get a chance to fix things.
- I used the questions when I had a fight with one of my friends and we were able to sort things out.



Change and Difference

What Students Say:

- When something happens in class, it is our responsibility to sort things out.
- I get into less trouble now that I understand how what I do hurts others in the class..
- I feel with cooperate much better in the class with one another.
- I have learned that you can work anything out by using the questions.
- The class is much better since we learned about restorative practice.

Change and Difference

What Parents Say:

- Since I learned how to use the questions, I find myself blaming less and listening more.
- I am surprised how the questions have taken most of the emotion from situations that go wrong.
- I have realised the important of being a facilitator and not a problem solver.
- As a parent, I feel that my relationship with my kids have improved now that I act in restorative ways.



Change and Difference

What Parents Say:

- Restorative practice has helped me greatly in my workplace.
- I manage a reasonably large workplace and since I have been exposed to restorative practice, I am much more confident at dealing with difficult issues.
- I find myself being pulled up by my kids when I ask the why question.
- Having my husband attend the parent evening has certainly helped our relationship.

What We Have Learned

- *The critical importance of sharing Restorative Practice with teachers, students and parents.*
- *This approach offers a common language and practice.*
- *It ensures a shared accountability. When all stakeholders are engaged in restorative practice, it is no longer a teacher's discretion as to whether he/she will use restorative practice; rather it becomes the community expectation.*



What We Have Learned

- *Restorative Practice is seen as a way of “thinking and being” where harm is repaired, issues are addressed and relationships are strengthened, creating safer environments conducive to teaching and learning*
- *The framework supports the development of more explicit and consistent practice.*
- *Attempting to use restorative practice without knowing how ‘to be’ restorative is problematic.*
- *Sustaining and embedding restorative practice is only possible where it is seen as integral to teaching and learning.*

What We Have Learned

- *Leadership is critical for restorative practice to be sustained.*
- *Visionary leadership and strong collegiality are the two key ingredients for success.*
- *Restorative interactions and circles are the basis for building collegiality.*
- *Regular uninterrupted dialogue amongst teachers about what works is essential to developing sound pedagogy.*



What We Have Learned

- *Classroom practice should be an extension of the modeling that does well at building sound collegiate relationships.*
- *Getting teachers to embrace restorative practice is far more challenging than getting students and parents to buy in.*
- *To show how restorative practice satisfies the key elements of quality teaching so that it is not seen as a program, set of strategies and techniques.*

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Restorative Practice in Canadian and
Australian School Systems*

Thank you for attending our workshop!!

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