

WORKING WITH OTHERS

Is accountable for own actions and decisions
and encourages accountability in others



Dealing with conflict – Restorative practices

Restorative practices originated in traditional ways of resolving conflict which took into account the *community* or *system* in which the conflict arose.

It is based on the idea that unresolved conflict arises from unmet relational need, and that until these are met the conflict will continue in some form or another.

The idea has been adapted across the world and in the UK is widely used in the justice system, particularly in youth and family courts. It is also being more commonly used in school communities and organisational settings.



Restorative practice uses a 'communication circle', where people take turns to talk. The turn-taking is structured so that listening and being listened to are key to the process. Sometimes it involves a 'talking object'. When you hold the talking object in a restorative conversation, no one can interrupt. Start with a restorative contract: an agreement on how to work together. The key values that underpin the contract are:

RESPECT HONESTY HUMILITY MUTUAL CARE ACCOUNTABILITY TRUST

These should be agreed by all parties before the conversation starts.

When there is conflict

Traditional questions:

- What's happened?
- Who's at fault? (i.e. who started it?)
- What needs to happen to make me feel better or make them suffer? (This is often spoken of as taking responsibility, ensuring there are consequences.)

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Restorative questions:

- What happened?
- How did you feel? What did you think?
- Who else was affected?
- What do you need to feel better now?
- What needs to happen to put things right/move things forward?
- And again... what is your, i.e. each person's, perspective on all these questions?



ACTIVITY

Quick Restorative Enquiry – when you're involved in potential conflict with another.

This is one suggested framework for such a conversation. The purpose is to reflect on how to deal with situations in a different way, as an alternative to what we might normally do.

- A asks the questions and B answers.
- Swap roles: B asks the questions, A answers.

Neither interrupts the other. The questioner listens carefully. Use a talking object to help you take turns, if it is helpful.

The questions:

- What's happened?
 - What were you thinking when it happened?... and how were you feeling?
 - What are you feeling now?
 - Who else has been affected?
 - What do you need from me to feel better?
 - What needs to happen to move forwards/put things right?
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- See if you can agree a way forward.
 - End with an appreciation or thank you.

NB If you cannot come to a consensus, that does not mean the process is a failure. The issue has been given time and space. Each person has been heard. The importance of the relationship has been acknowledged.



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Have a go at using this structure on a small disagreement. See what benefits there are.
Collect your findings and reflections here.

Maybe there are other processes you prefer to use in resolving conflicts. Write your
reflections on these instead.

Discuss your findings with other managers. Gather a collection of ideas that can work.
When you need some ideas you will have them waiting for you!

For more information: International Institute of Restorative Practices
[Restorative practices web link](#)



Complete the Reflection sheet