Weaving restorative practices into Lutheran school communities

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An unfolding story......

- There has to be a better way

- A gap...

- A bit disconnected

- Our values as Lutheran Educators

    - *"Lifelong qualities for Learners....Living in community and reflecting characteristics of God through core values, especially love, justice, compassion....etc*

- At long last....

"We have come to understand that significant cultural change is possible within schools when they choose to work restoratively with young people"
Margaret Thorsborne & David Vinegrad,
"Restorative Practices in Classrooms: Rethinking Behaviour Management" , 2006

The relational management project:

A Lutheran Education Queensland initiative to initiate, encourage, and support:

- the development of our school cultures to align with our values as Lutheran Educators

- embedding the philosophy and processes of Restorative Practices (RP) across our schools,

- And therefore, in particular, to encourage and support the review of behaviour management policies to be restorative and relational, rather than punitive

"You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist."
Indira Gandhi , quoted by Christian Science Monitor, May 17, 1982

Step by step....a 3-5 year project

- A steering group

- A special friend – Marg Thorsborne, a pioneer, facilitator, and trainer in RP

- Appointment of Relational Management Coordinator as a seconded, 2 day per week position, initially for 1 year

- A call for Pilot Schools - Memorandum of understanding to Principals.

- Orientation day – to set direction, explore values base for change, reflection and planning for whole of school culture development

- Email network

- Mid-year 3 day intensive training facilitated by Marg Thorsborne

- Coordinator to support, encourage, coach via phone, email, and school visits

- A Share and Discuss day for Pilot Schools is planned for next year so that schools can share what is working and what isn't, swap ideas and resources etc

Art and science......

- ....appealing to hearts and minds – especially the Principal's!

- .... Culture is the result of messages that are received about what is really valued. People align their behaviour to these messages in order to fit in. Changing culture requires a systematic and planned change to these messages, whose sources are behaviour, symbols and systems. (Peta Blood and Margaret Thorsborne, *The Challenge of Culture Change: Embedding Restorative Practice in Schools. 2005*

- Developing a culture of restorative pedagogy....in our classrooms and playgrounds, in our staffrooms and carparks, in our newsletters and websites, in how we treat each other face to face.....and behind each others' backs....
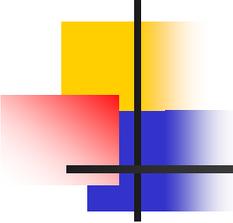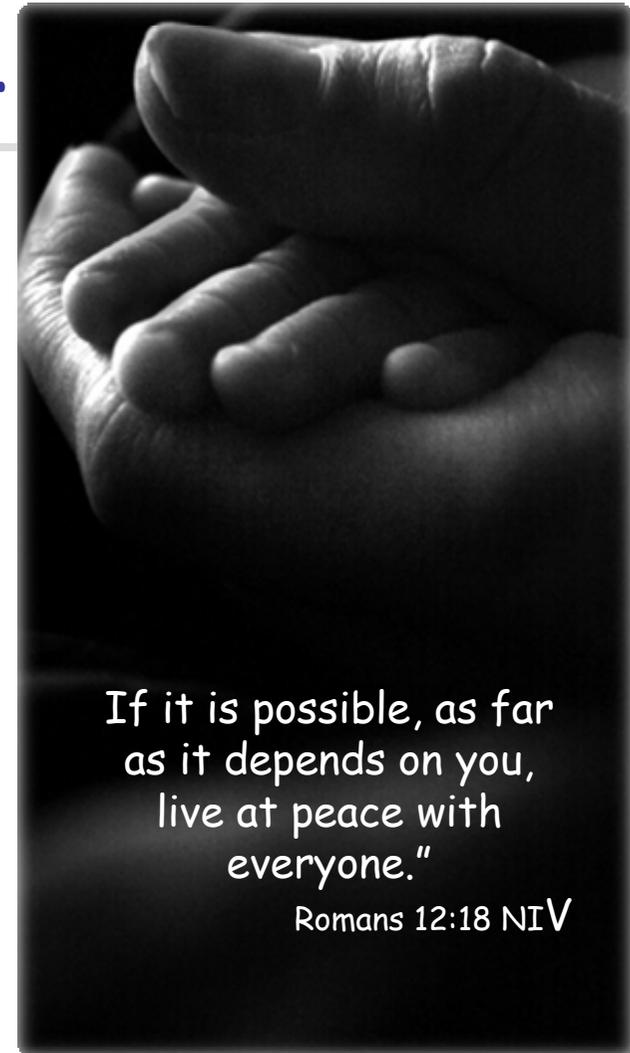
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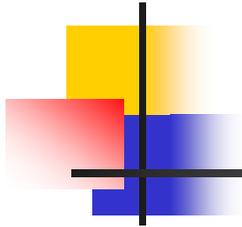
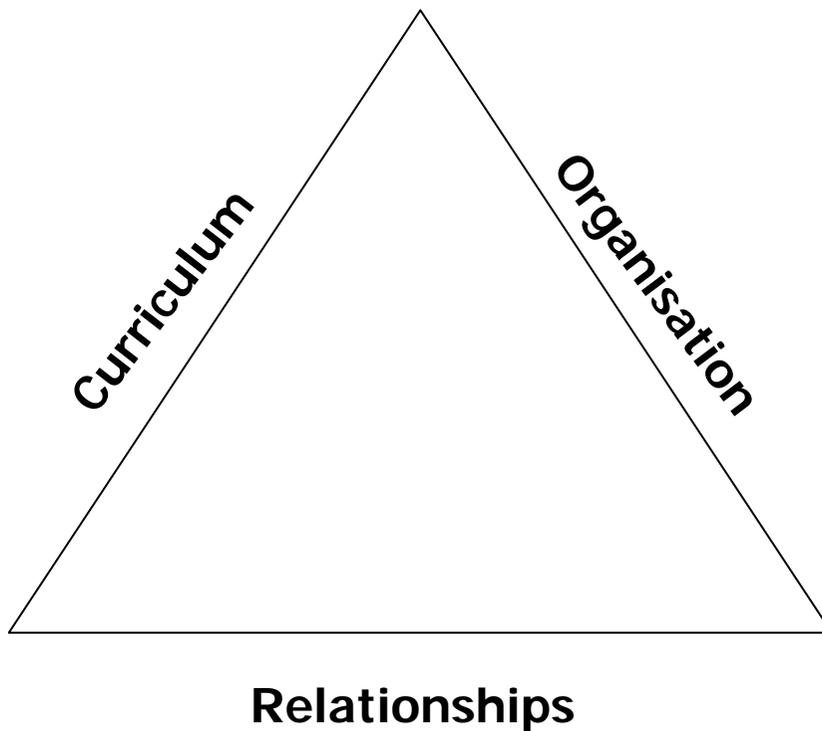*"....True justice emerges from conversation...."*

Howard Zehr, "*The Little Book of Restorative Justice*", 2002

Photo by Jesse Richards, Year 12 , St Andrews Lutheran College

Relationships matter…
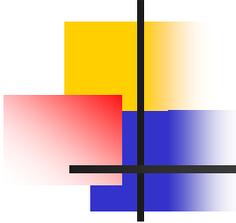
Curriculum

Organisation

Relationships

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

Romans 12:18 NIV

Photo by Jesse Richards, Year 12 , St Andrews Lutheran College

Living theology.....

Creation

De-Creation

Re-Creation

Student behaviour is not always the full story.....

Traditional responses

- What happened?
- What rule was broken?
- Who's to blame?
- What punishment is deserved?
- ....lecture, threat, warning, detention, removal from class, daily report, move seat, time out, suspension, expulsion
- Or in the "good old days"....six of the best or a wallop on the backside!

Discipline issues involve….

- Judgement by the teacher at classroom level
- Skill of the teacher to escalate/de-escalate
- Track record of the referring teacher
- Understanding of the student's family and peer relationships
- Previous behaviour and academic history of student
- Immediate context of the behaviour
- Culmination of behaviours which threaten teacher authority
- School or Principal's disciplinary philosophy
- Emotions!

Adapted from Skiba et al 2003 quoted by Margaret Thorsborne 2008

Limitations of punishment-based systems to control behaviour….

- Focus on "stopping" rather than "changing" behaviour
- Rarely address causes or effects effectively
- Don't encourage self-reflection or responsibility

- Aim becomes to avoid punishment – don't get caught
- Damage relationships, and impact on self esteem
- Encourage resentment, revenge, and rebellion
- Model inflicting pain and unpleasantness
- Assume person harmed is helped by others being punished
- Can gain compliance for the wrong reasons
- Emphasises external control as opposed to internal control
- Can put the school in the role of adversary

Adapted from Pathhead Primary Scotland, Morrison 2007, and Bill Hubbard, Rosehill College Auckland, NZ.
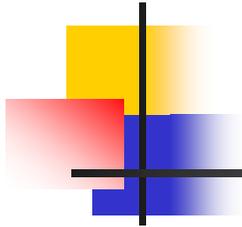
Hang on a minute.......

- When a child has trouble reading, we.... teach
- When a child has trouble spelling, we ....teach
- When a child has trouble with maths, we.....teach
- When a child has trouble behaving, we ....punish?

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Thinking about discipline….

What outcomes do we seek for:

- The school community as a whole?
- The wrongdoer?
- The wrongdoer's parents
- The victim?
- The victim's parents?
- Staff involved in the incident?

Margaret Thorsborne 2008

What are Restorative Practices (RP)?
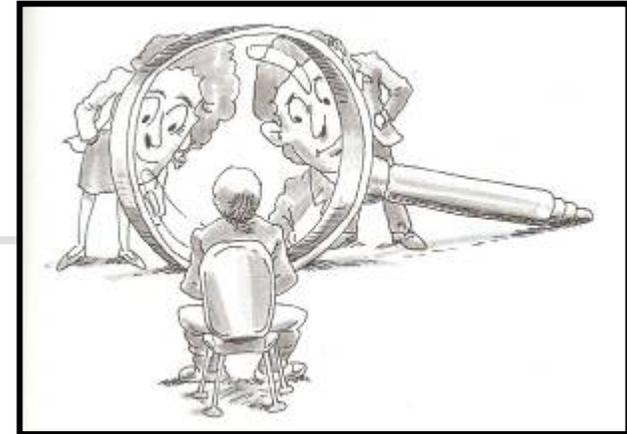
T.Taylor Dealing with People you can't Stand, 1994

- **A Process**

- **A Set of Values**

- **A Fresh Way of Looking at wrongdoing and interpersonal conflict<u>:</u>**

  - **A Third Way – "Fight or flight/freeze " aren't the only options!**

  - **A New "Lens" – embracing <u>both</u> support & accountability / the Law and the Gospel**

Key Principles of Restorative Practice

- All crime and misconduct is a fundamental violation of people and interpersonal relationships. So too are "toxic" and unresolved interpersonal conflicts.

- Violations create obligations and liabilities.

- Restorative Practice seeks to heal and put things right.

Building Social Capital
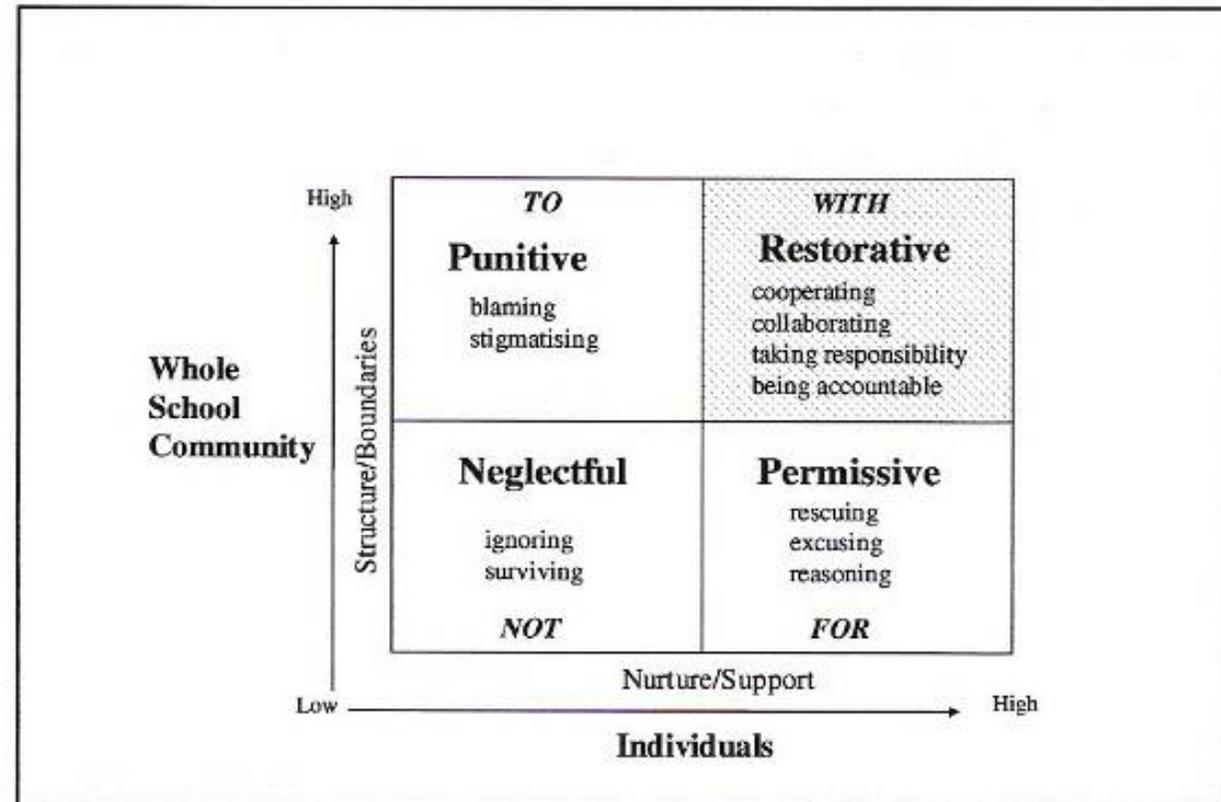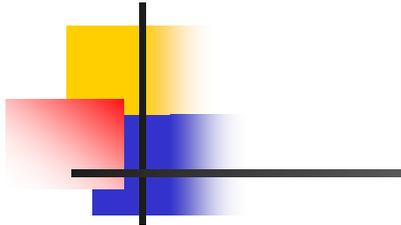
Figure 1: Building Social Capital, Adapted from Wachtel,T (1999).
The Challenge of Culture Change, Peta Blood & Margaret Thorsborne (2005)

Photo by Jesse Richards, Year 12 , St Andrews Lutheran College

Building Social Capital (b)

Limits / boundaries / expectations

Power struggles
Confrontations
Rules
Win-Lose
Retribution
Revenge
Punitive

Consistent
Responsive
Adaptive
Cooperation
Negotiation
Accountable
Responsible

TO | **WITH**

NOT | **FOR**

Uncaring
Tired
Lazy
Burnt out
Given up
Harsh

Chaotic
Inconsistent
Excusing
Giving in
Blurred boundaries
Rescuing
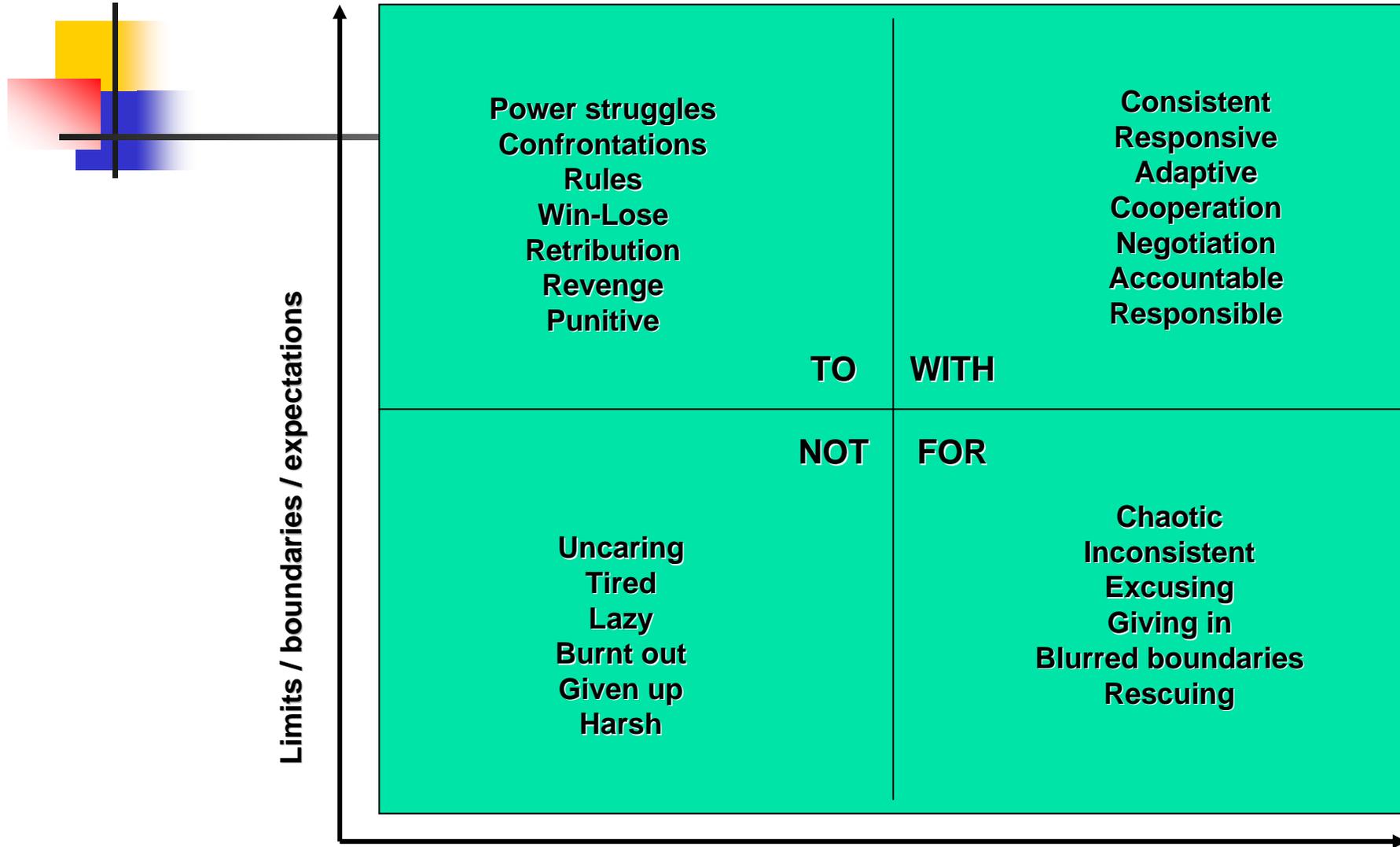
Support / care / nurture

Adapted from Margaret Thorsborne
2008
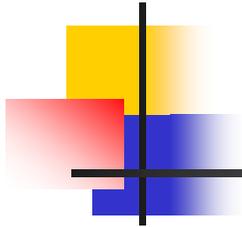
Genuine accountability, then, includes an opportunity:

- To understand the human consequences of what has been done

- To take responsibility

- To take part in a process to decide what needs to be done to put things right

- Take steps to heal and repair

- Address the cause(s) of one's own behaviour

Howard Zehr 1990, Adapted from Margaret Thorsborne 2008

Key Questions

Respectful dialogue & restorative enquiry is at the heart of RP
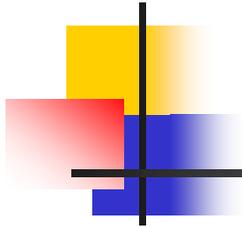
- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected?
- In what way(s)?
- What needs to be done to put things right?
- What can be done to make sure this doesn't happen again?

It's important to note….

The effectiveness
of these
Questions lies not
just in <u>what</u> is
asked but <u>how</u>
they are asked.

Cartoon by Richard Gunther

Putting RP into action

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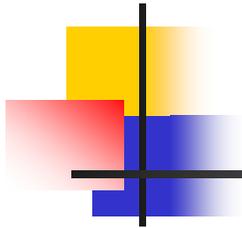
Informal   Formal
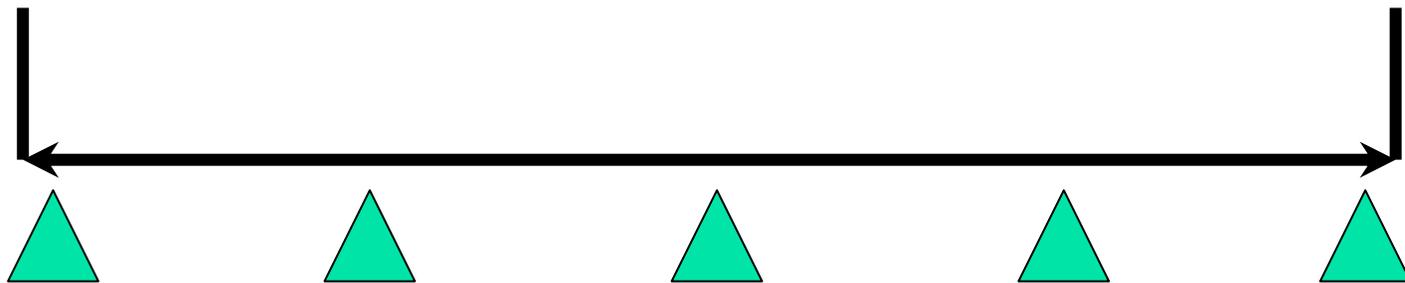
| affective statements | affective questions | Restorative Chat | Large group/small group / classroom conference | Formal Conference |

Adapted from "Restorative Justice in Everyday Life", Ted Wachtel, 1999

Compiled by Steve Brady April 2008

Where does it fit?

Whole school model of restorative practices: an integrated approach

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1-5% of population

Restorative Conferencing

Mediation

RESTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Restorative chats, classroom conferences, problem solving circles

MANAGING DIFFICULTIES & DISRUPTIONS

Relational practices, school/classroom policies, curricula, social skills programs, Care groups, chapels etc

DEVELOPING SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL CAPACITY

Accountability, responsibility for self and others, working together, personal potency

Whole school

Adapted from "Restoring Safe School Communities", Brenda Morrison (2007) with reference to Peta Blood 2004

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Culture is multi-faceted

Rituals Routines

Stories and Myths

Ethos and Values

Control Systems

Symbols

Structure

Two models for culture change were offered to the pilot schools, to guide their thinking and planning. This one, and the one on the following slide.

Stories and Myths the stories people tell

Staff professional development   Newsletters   Brochures
Case studies   Conference presentations
Ongoing restorative conversations between staff / students / parents

Symbols ways to show what is really valued

Displays Posters Artworks Badges Wristbands
Wallet-sized cards with the Questions printed
Restorative/ reflection / "safe" / "chill" designated areas within school
Time invested by staff / students / parents to "restore" when things go wrong

Rituals& Routines The school's habits

Chapel services   Assemblies   - to highlight "the way we do things around here"
Widespread adoption of restorative language especially "the Questions" and affective statements
Playground supervisions and BM strategies adapted to Relational Management model
Regular use of Circles/Mini-conferences to solve problems

Structures Hierarchies Management procedures

Restorative conferencing structures put in place
Policies reviewed and adapted to Restorative Practices model
Clear referral and support procedures eg Student Services, Counselling, Chaplaincy, Staff support
Review and recycle for sustained restorative culture development
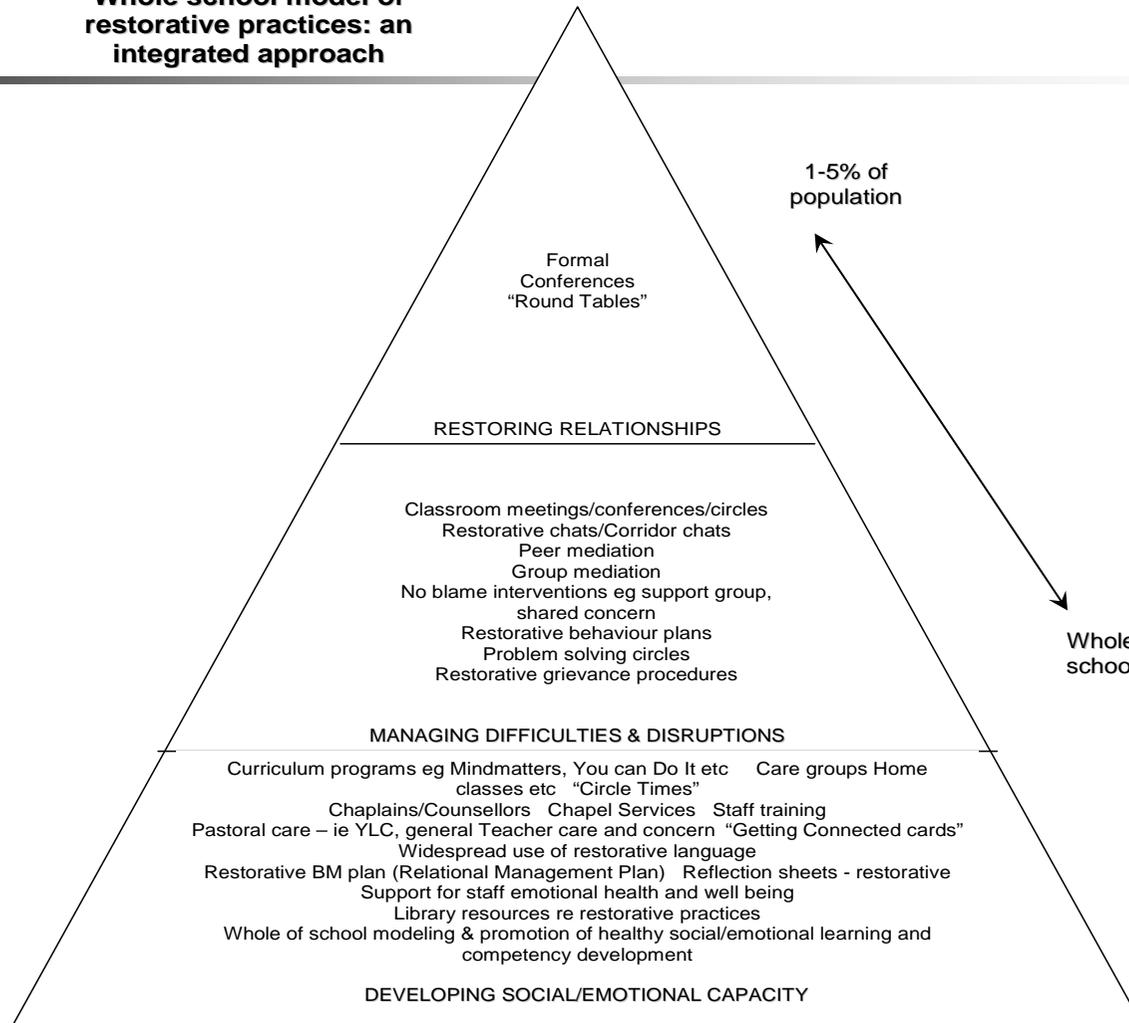
Control Systems Sanctions / rewards

Playground supervisions and BM policies strategies adapted to Relational Management model
Reflection sheets with restorative focus
Expanded "toolkit" for teachers eg restorative continuum + proximity / nonverbal cues/ warnings/ change of seating etc – note also No Blame interventions for bullying etc

Developing an Action Plan – Triangle Model

Adapted from "Restoring Safe School Communities", Brenda Morrison (2007) with reference to Peta Blood 2004

Whole school model of restorative practices: an integrated approach

1-5% of population

Formal
Conferences
"Round Tables"

RESTORING RELATIONSHIPS

Classroom meetings/conferences/circles
Restorative chats/Corridor chats
Peer mediation
Group mediation
No blame interventions eg support group,
shared concern
Restorative behaviour plans
Problem solving circles
Restorative grievance procedures

Whole school

MANAGING DIFFICULTIES & DISRUPTIONS

Curriculum programs eg Mindmatters, You can Do It etc   Care groups Home
classes etc   "Circle Times"
Chaplains/Counsellors   Chapel Services   Staff training
Pastoral care – ie YLC, general Teacher care and concern "Getting Connected cards"
Widespread use of restorative language
Restorative BM plan (Relational Management Plan)   Reflection sheets - restorative
Support for staff emotional health and well being
Library resources re restorative practices
Whole of school modeling & promotion of healthy social/emotional learning and
competency development

DEVELOPING SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL CAPACITY

Back to the Relational Management Project
...*What's been happening for the 9 schools* (4 x P-12, 1 x P-6, 3 x P-7, & 1 x 8-12) *aligned with the project?*

The schools, each at different stages of development, with differing levels of available resources, have engaged in a combination of the following:

- Review of policies and procedures
- Formation of implementation teams
- Professional development for staff
- Having a go at using restorative processes for dealing with incidents – serious and not so serious
- Purchase of resources
- Parent information evenings
- Meetings with key staff
- Development of brochures for parents, and students
- Key restorative questions printed on wallet–sized cards for staff and parents
- Data collection and evaluation processes developed
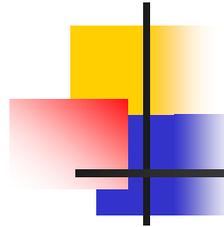
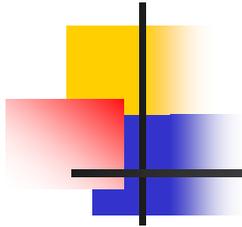# Snapshots......

St Johns Lutheran Primary School
Kingaroy – Qld

St Andrews Lutheran College

Gold Coast - Qld
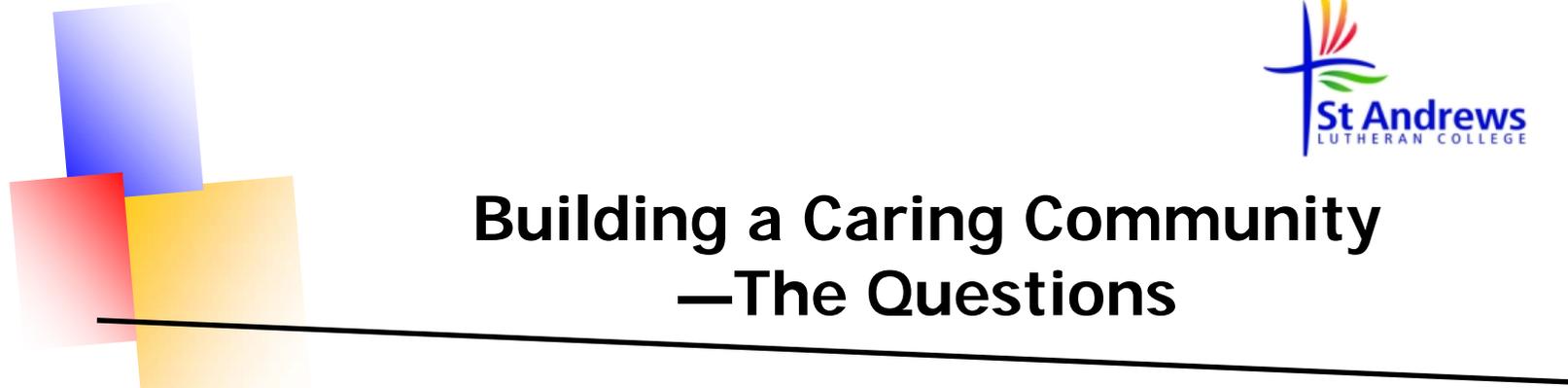
Building a Caring Community —The Questions
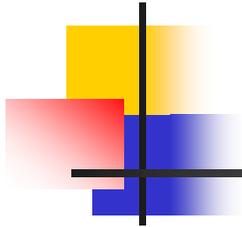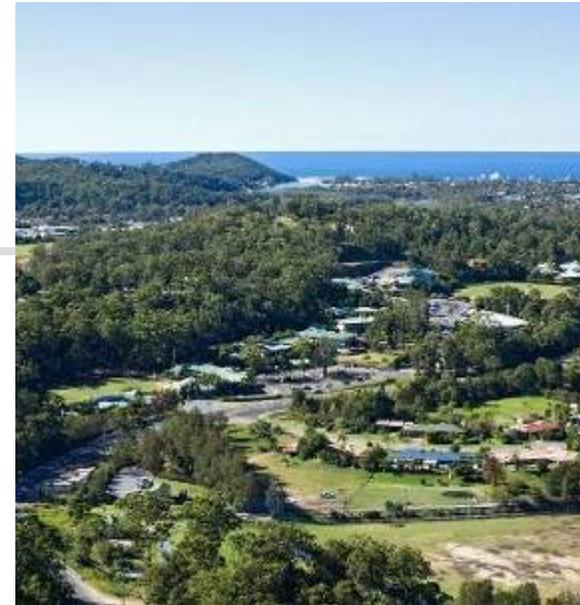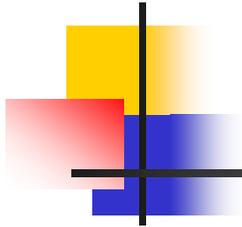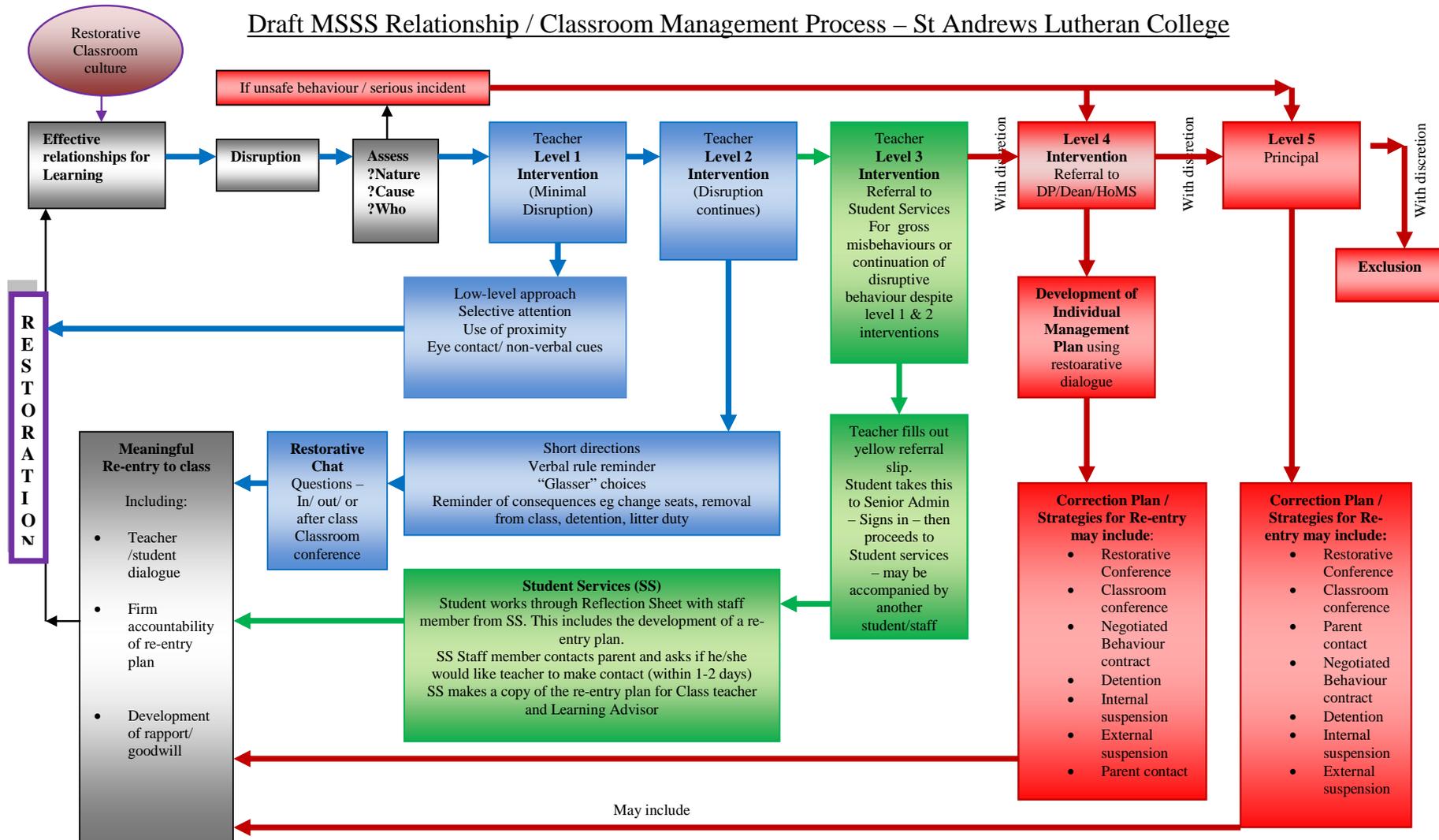
Get Real . Repair . Reconnect

- What has happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- Who has been affected, and in what way?
- What can you do to make things right?
- Is there anything that you need to ask me to do?

Get Real . Repair . Reconnect

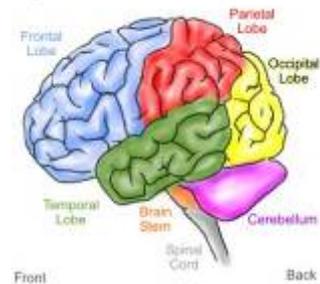## Draft MSSS Relationship / Classroom Management Process – St Andrews Lutheran College

Restorative Classroom culture

If unsafe behaviour / serious incident

Effective relationships for Learning

Disruption

Assess ?Nature ?Cause ?Who

Teacher **Level 1 Intervention** (Minimal Disruption)

Teacher **Level 2 Intervention** (Disruption continues)

Teacher **Level 3 Intervention** Referral to Student Services For gross misbehaviours or continuation of disruptive behaviour despite level 1 & 2 interventions

With discretion

Level 4 Intervention Referral to DP/Dean/HoMS

With discretion

Level 5 Principal

With discretion

Exclusion

Low-level approach
Selective attention
Use of proximity
Eye contact/ non-verbal cues

Development of Individual Management Plan using restoarative dialogue

Teacher fills out yellow referral slip.
Student takes this to Senior Admin – Signs in – then proceeds to Student services – may be accompanied by another student/staff

R E S T O R A T I O N

Meaningful Re-entry to class

Including:

- Teacher /student dialogue

- Firm accountability of re-entry plan

- Development of rapport/ goodwill

Restorative Chat
Questions – In/ out/ or after class
Classroom conference

Short directions
Verbal rule reminder
"Glasser" choices
Reminder of consequences eg change seats, removal from class, detention, litter duty

Student Services (SS)
Student works through Reflection Sheet with staff member from SS. This includes the development of a re-entry plan.
SS Staff member contacts parent and asks if he/she would like teacher to make contact (within 1-2 days)
SS makes a copy of the re-entry plan for Class teacher and Learning Advisor

Correction Plan / Strategies for Re-entry may include:

- Restorative Conference
- Classroom conference
- Negotiated Behaviour contract
- Detention
- Internal suspension
- External suspension
- Parent contact

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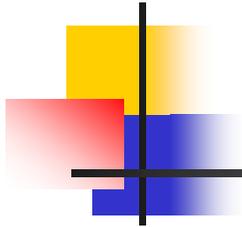May include

Some challenges:

Restorative practices are like a river....

- ..... with many small beginnings
- ..... that can bring meaningful changes
- ..... that can turn negative incidents into constructive events
- ..... that can build empathy and social skills to develop a sense of community
- ..... that can help to build a culture of listening and fairness

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The Round Table is intended to be a place of peacemaking, where the process itself, the environment of the table, and a willingness to 'make a difference', will help make it possible to turn conflict into co-operation.

St Andrews Lutheran College Round Table Policy Summary for Parents