Pedagogy

Pedagogy is “reasoned, moral, human interaction, within a reflective… educative context that facilitates the acquisition of new knowledge, beliefs or skills.”

MacNeill & Silcox, 2003

Humans become humane. The capacity to care, to share, to listen, to value and to be empathic – to be compassionate – develops from being cared for, shared with, listened to, valued and nurtured ...through patterned, repetitive, neuronal activity…in relating to developmentally-mature individuals.

Perry, 2007

Zone of Proximal Development. Social interaction is the basis for cognitive and emotional growth. What the child is able to do in collaboration today, he will be able to do independently tomorrow.

Vygotsky, 1987
Neuroscience

The development of the brain is a “use-dependent” process. There are “windows” of opportunity for optimal development. Patterned, repetitive neuronal activity is necessary for full development. Just as in learning words, we learn to relate. Challenge a little beyond capabilities is the key to brain growth.

There are two main periods of neuroplasticity and metaplasticity – early childhood, and adolescence. In adolescence, the limbic system and the cortex are under greatest development.

Particularly in adolescence, neural circuits which are not used and reinforced are pruned.

The more exposure to, and experience of, empathy, decision-making, impulse control, and other-focussed compassion during childhood, and through adolescence, the more the neural circuits for these abilities will be strengthened (and prevented from being pruned).

Each child has his or her own unique genetic potential, yet this potential is expressed differentially depending upon the nature, timing and the pattern of developmental experience.

Today, the typical American 18 year-old, in a typical loving family, who watches the typical hours of television, and has the typical bedroom, and typical amount of ‘screen time’ in a day… will have had the same number of social-emotional learning opportunities, that three decades before, was typical of a child at age six. That is, they have the cognitive skills of an 18 year old, but the social-emotional skills of a 6 year old.

It is as important for us to think intentionally and deliberately about creating social-emotional, relationally-enriched curriculum as it is to develop curriculum around science, math, engineering. In fact, I would argue that it’s more essential that we develop intentional opportunities for relational enrichment in the lives of our children in order to express [their] potential.

Adolescence is now longer

The bottom line is that for boys as well as girls, adolescence starts earlier, ends later, and lasts longer than it ever has – three times as long as it did 150 years ago, and more than twice as long as it was in the 1950s. Because the age of puberty is continuing to fall, so is the age at which the brain’s reward system becomes so easily aroused. The maturation of the brain’s self-control system is not driven by puberty, however. This means that the development of self-control has not been affected by the fact that children go through puberty earlier. Adolescents’ abilities to plan, think ahead, and control their impulses probably don’t develop along a more accelerated pace today than they did a hundred years ago. When adolescence was only five years long, the age at which the brain became easily aroused as a consequence of puberty coincided with when we become able to effectively deal with this arousal. Because the age at which people develop mature self-control has not declined, but the age at which their passions are ignited has, the gap in years between these occurrences has widened. And with it, so has the length of the period during which young people are vulnerable to the consequences of having a mismatch between the power of their accelerator and the strength of their braking system.

Self-Regulation ~ The key skill

The capacity for self-regulation is probably the single most important contributor to achievement, mental health, and social success. The ability to exercise control over what we think, what we feel, and what we do protects against a wide range of psychological disorders, contributes to more satisfying and fulfilling relationships, and facilitates accomplishment in the worlds of school and work. This makes developing self-regulation the central task of adolescence…

“self-regulation... turns out to be a stronger predictor of success in the classroom than intelligence, talent, or standardised test scores.”

“…developing self-regulation… should be a fundamental goal of education”
**Hattie: Know Thy Impact**

Hattie, 2008

“Holding high standards without providing a warm environment is merely harsh. A warm environment without high standards lacks backbone. But if you can create a combination of high standards with a warm and supportive environment it will benefit all students, not just the high achievers.”

ASEBT, 2016

**High Performance Relationships**

![Diagram of High Performance Relationships](image1.png)

Australian Society for Evidence Based Teaching, 2016

**Cognitive Vs Non-cognitive Skills**

Non-cognitive skills is a misnomer. The distinction isn’t really between thinking and non-thinking. It’s the difference between factors that are intellectual and those that are motivational.

Steinberg, 2014

**Marzano & Kendall: The New Taxonomy of Educational Objectives**

![Diagram of Student Development](image2.png)

The self-system consists of an interrelated arrangement of attitudes, beliefs, and emotions. It is the interaction of these attitudes, beliefs, and emotions that determines both motivation and attention. The self-system determines whether an individual will engage in or disengage in a given task; it also determines how much energy the individual will bring to the task.

Marzano & Kendall, 2007
Aristotle’s Practical Wisdom

Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.

Aristotle’s ‘Practical Wisdom’ consists of two abilities (both of which are learned):
Moral Skill — the ability to discern the right thing to do
Moral Will — the ability to choose to do this right thing

Top Twenty Principles from Psychology for PreK-12 Teaching and Learning

PRINCIPLE 7: Students’ self-regulation assists learning, and self-regulatory skills can be taught.
PRINCIPLE 14: Interpersonal relationships and communication are critical to both the teaching–learning process and the social-emotional development of students.
PRINCIPLE 15: Emotional well-being influences educational performance, learning, and development.
PRINCIPLE 16: Expectations for classroom conduct and social interaction are learned and can be taught using proven principles of behavior and effective classroom instruction.
PRINCIPLE 17: Effective classroom management is based on (a) setting and communicating high expectations, (b) consistently nurturing positive relationships, and (c) providing a high level of student support.

Restorative Practices

A coherent, but counter-cultural, way of viewing wrongdoing and the obligations it brings.

RP offers intentionality (the promise of explicit practice – knowing what you do, why you do it, and how you know it works) and alignment (congruent practice – consistent with our primary role as educators).

The ‘Traditional’ (adversarial, retributive) approach to conflict/wrongdoing is built around asking three questions:
• What rule was broken?
• Who is responsible?
• What do they deserve?
Answers to these questions are usually reached by others not involved in the wrongdoing or conflict.

The ‘Restorative’ approach is built around three different key questions:
• What happened?
• What harm has been done, to whom?
• What can be done to address the harm?
and it brings people together in order to answer these.

A Reality

Our work in schools is moral work. It is also emotional work. It is built around relationships – involving students, teachers, colleagues, parents.

The Field of Restorative Practice

Restorative practices views every instance of wrongdoing as an opportunity for learning – especially for those responsible for the wrongdoing. It is an educative process which challenges the offender to become aware of, and sensitive to, the harm their actions have caused, to consider the needs of ‘the other,’ and to meet the obligation for reparation that their behaviour has brought. It enables those affected by the wrongdoing to have their story told and affirmed, and offers both offender and victim the opportunity to be involved in working out how to repair some of the harm that has been caused.

The inter-relatedness which is emphasised in the philosophy of restorative practices, can be described in a graph, as shown on the next page. In this two-dimensional field of practice, on the vertical axis are ‘challenge’ – i.e. expectations that people will be all that they can be, including being accountable for their behaviour and actions. On the horizontal axis is ‘Support’ – i.e. the assistance people need to really be all that they can be.
To have relationships in which we expect people to be all that they can be (high on the vertical axis), but not offer support for them doing that (low on the horizontal axis), is to treat people as objects to manage. This is reflected in a punitive regime, and involves doing things TO people in order to get them to do what we want.

Relationships in which we don’t expect people to be all that they can be, but support them anyway, involve treating them permissively as objects of need. We tend to do things FOR these people, often so that we feel good. If we don’t expect people to be all that they can be, and don’t support them, then we treat them as objects to ignore, and neglect them. In each of these three types of responses, harm can be done to the person’s self-esteem and sense of self-worth. These types of relationships can also perpetuate harm in the wake of wrongdoing by re-victimising those affected by this harm.

To expect that people will be all that they can be, and to support them in striving for that, we are then working WITH people, not as objects to manage, objects to ignore or objects of need, but as subjects to engage. This is what restorative practices challenges us to do. Working in this top-right quadrant, in which we have high expectations of people and in which we strongly support them to be all that they can be, is really expressing unconditional love. It is effectively saying “no matter what you do or say, I’m still going to support you and hold you accountable to be all that you can be.”

George, 2015

Alignment (Congruent Practice)

RP Beliefs
Those people who are directly involved and most affected are best placed to resolve a conflict or solve a problem. Much, if not most, wrongdoing and conflict is emotionally-driven. Much, if not most, harm caused is emotional harm. The free expression of emotion in a safe environment enables the participants to metabolise this negative emotion and work together towards solutions.

A ‘Restorative’ Process is one which…
- Brings together all those who have a stake in a specific incident
- Recognises who has been affected
- Explores and acknowledges how they have been affected
- Identifies what needs to happen in order to repair the harm caused, and
- Enables the group to work out how to put things as right as possible

Accountability: is often constructed as the wrongdoer ‘getting their just desserts’ But – genuine accountability involves:
- understanding the human consequences of one’s actions
- facing up to what one has done and to whom one has done it
- taking responsibility for the results of one’s behaviour
- helping decide what will happen to make things right, and
- taking steps to repair the damage
**Fundamental Principles of Restorative Practices**

1. Relationships precede rules – the key issue with wrongdoing is the harm that it causes to people and relationships.
2. Justice by participation rather than by proxy – that those most affected should be directly involved.
3. Restoration of wounded communities, not just adjudication of offending individuals – that a restorative approach seeks healing, not just retribution, and
4. The restorative justice continuum: from order, to rehabilitation, to shalom.

“communities ideally desire not simply order, not even just the rehabilitation or treatment of its ill members, but a deeper and more constitutive peace – that is, a fundamental at-rightness and well-being of relationships that actually feeds relational growth.”

Denk, 2008

Restorative Practice is a PROCESS, i.e. it is a lived reality, which aims to restore people within themselves, and to (and within) their community of care.

**We operate Restoratively by...**

Having high expectations and insisting on high standards of behaviour, while providing high levels of support and care for individuals to meet these expectations.

We focus first on restoring any harm done, and treating incidents primarily as ‘teachable moments’

“Behaviour is confronted with disapproval… within a continuum of respect and support”

“Love the sinner… hate the sin”

Braithwaite, 1989

St Augustine, City of God, XIV, 6

**Brain States prompted by the four responses**

The punitive, neglectful and permissive responses each activate primarily the limbic system and prime the brain for an emotional reaction.

The restorative response, on the other hand, quietens the amygdala – relaxing the limbic system – and enabling the upper cortex to become engaged. Executive function and reasoning are now possible.

‘Neurogenesis within the amygdala – the seat of empathy – is possible under the right external conditions’

Sauffler, 2012

Reisel, 2014
The Spectrum of Restorative Practices

The purposes of any restorative process
- to have the difficult discussions that need to occur with the aim of repairing harm done
- to challenge students’ thinking towards ‘the other’
- to encourage the development of values and character
- to educate towards practical wisdom – moral skill & moral will

Restorative Questions

For those who’ve done the wrong thing...
- 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?

For those affected...
- 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?

Restorative Practices is an educative philosophy which
- enables the building, nurturing and repair of healthy relationships
- gives us the means to respond effectively to incidents of conflict & wrongdoing
- helps us to develop authentic community within our classrooms
- enables us to help form the whole person
- enables us to teach
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