An Introduction to "Discipline that Restores" (DTR)
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I have hope that some day restorative justice will be what most people think of when they think of justice. Maybe some day we will have to explain to our children and grandchildren that there was a time when most people thought that justice was retributive justice.

An example that is giving me hope now is the discipline program at Raisin City School. Roxanne (we've been married for 30 years) is the eighth-grade teacher. She and I have been working on what we call "Discipline that Restores" (DTR) for nearly 10 years now. Roxanne completed her BA with a major in Conflict and Peacemaking and is completing her MA in Conflict Management and Peacemaking. Her initial interest was in using Restorative Justice to guide how she would deal with conflict and misbehavior in her classroom.

At first those who watched her thought she was "soft" on misbehavior. But, as the principal and other teachers noticed, her approach not only reduced misbehavior; it began to transform the climate in her classroom. In some very ironic ways, it made it more acceptable to disagree with each other, but the disagreements became occasions to understand each other better and to negotiate and learn better ways of being together rather than occasions to put people down or hurt each other. So it became increasingly clear that DTR was not soft on misbehavior.

Ten years ago, about the same time Roxanne started DTR in her classroom (with administration skepticism and blessing), the administration decided it was necessary to get "tough." The hope was that if discipline was "tougher" it would stop what seemed to be a trend toward increasing misbehavior, conflicts among students, disrespect for teachers, and fights on campus. So the school-wide system called for increasing punishment: more warnings and detentions followed by more suspensions and expulsions. What happened was that the overall climate became more tense, less cooperative, and more stressful for everyone.

At the beginning of the next year, with new administrative leadership, we were invited to provide some training for the entire staff on Discipline that Restores (DTR). We started by exploring together what each teacher hoped to accomplish with his or her discipline preference, whatever it was. Interestingly, what teachers with very different approaches hoped to accomplish was very similar. Everyone agreed that they wanted students to learn respect. They all wanted students to learn to get along better, to be able to solve their problems by talking rather than by hitting. So when we looked at DTR principle #4 it made sense. It says, "DTR recognizes both the danger and opportunity created by the misbehavior and conflicts that underlie

the misbehavior. As soon as immediate safety concerns are satisfied, DTR views misbehavior and conflict as a teachable moment."

Roxanne starts the year by having all of the students write what they would do if they were showing respect for each other, for the teacher, for the books and furniture and what the teacher would do if the teacher were showing respect for the students. She also writes down her thoughts and then makes a composite of all of their ideas. She asks students to consider if this is the kind of classroom they would like. After they rework some of the items together, they are all invited to sign this as an agreement for how they will be together.

Sometimes they forget. When this happens she reminds them of the agreement and if the problem persists, she invites them to meet with her to see if they can cooperatively find a way solve the problem that is keeping them from being able to keep the agreement. She tells them that she would rather never have to just use her power over them to control them and she won't unless they refuse to try to solve the problem cooperatively.

Some students actually ask her if she would just punish them because then they wouldn't have to keep making these agreements that they are expected to keep. Usually they soon change their minds and decide they really want to cooperate. They appreciate the opportunity to share the power with her in making agreements that are good for both.

At Raisin City School, all teachers have an opportunity to participate in four full days of training in DTR principles, strategies and skills to implement it. The School Handbook says their discipline system is Discipline that Restores.

The results are significant. Detentions and suspensions have been dramatically decreased while the school has become a safer place to be. In the 1998-99 school year, for instance, there was only one fight. It was just one punch because the other students rather than cheering on a fight, broke it up and took the students to the Dean for help to work it out.

One of her eight grade students last year is now a student at Caruthers High School. In the first week she told her mother (who works at Raisin City School) that at lunch one day suddenly everyone was yelling fight, fight and running to cheer it on. When she looked around at those who were still seated at the tables, most of them were Raisin City School students. This was not part of their experience.

One other piece of good news this year is that of the Raisin City students who are first year students at Caruthers High School, 40% of them are on the honor roll. Maybe the cooperation carries over to learning the academic subjects as well.

This could be happening in all of our schools.

This story gives me hope that our community could become a safe, peaceful and respectful place to be. It could be a place where misbehavior, disagreements, and conflicts are viewed as opportunities to learn to know each other better and as occasions where fairness and justice can be negotiated in an atmosphere where all people are valued.

We realize that it would be naïve to assume that everyone will always choose to be cooperative. DTR principle #9 says, "DTR recognizes that not all misbehaving persons will choose to be cooperative. Therefore there is a need for outside authority to make decisions for the misbehaving person who is not willing to be cooperative. The consequences imposed should be tested by whether they are reasonable, related, restorative, and respectful."

Restorative Justice is not "soft" on crime. It is very different from retributive justice. VORP is a part of what could become a Restorative Justice system. I have hope.

The Principles of Discipline that Restores

There is a saying "The purity of theory is no match for the mess of reality." We recognize this to have some truth and also recognize that if we do not have theory to guide us, we are like "a ship without a rudder." We developed these principles in 1993 to help provide a guide, or a "rudder" for our emerging ideas about how to implement Restorative Justice principles in a school setting.

Principle 1: Misbehavior is viewed primarily as an offense against human relationships and secondarily as a violation of a school rule (since school rules are written to protect safety and fairness in human relationships).

In the community when someone violates a law, we call it a crime. In schools, when someone violates a rule, we call it a misbehavior. If there is a misbehavior observed that isn't covered by a rule yet, we usually write a new rule. Rules are very important and helpful since they help everyone to know what behavior is not acceptable in that school community. Rules also prevent, or at least reduce, arbitrary punishment because the rules are published for everyone to know and members of the school community can appeal to the rules if it seems that they are being punished arbitrarily.

Where this becomes a problem, is when the primary focus of a discipline program is on the rule violation and because of that, the human violation is ignored or minimized. Since the purpose of establishing rules is to provide for a safe, fair, just, and orderly community, it is important that this underlying reason is not lost in our effort to be sure we follow the rules.

So, this principle suggests that when a misbehavior occurs and it is a violation of a rule, we will not lose sight of the fact that the primary problem is that some human *violation* occurred. Let's identify a few common misbehaviors that are usually also violations of school rules: A. A student hitting another student. B. A student carving or writing on a school wall. C. A student talking rudely to a teacher. One option, in each case, is to focus on the fact that the student violated a school rule. When we do this, we usually punish the student in some way or we may say you now need to suffer the consequences. In either case, if we follow this path, a significant but very subtle thing happens. We inadvertently make the school the "victim" because we are now focusing on the school's rule as being violated. What gets lost is the real violation of the other person(s).

If, instead, we allow this principle to provide guidance for us, we will remember that a rule violation is also an indicator or reminder that there has been a human violation. When we focus on the human violation, we begin asking questions like, who was hurt, what was the damage, who is responsible for what, how can the damage be repaired, why did this happen, how could it be prevented in the future, etc.

If we do not recognize and focus on the human violation, the primary focus often shifts from the real violation to a power contest between the authorities and the offending individual. Instead of focusing on the questions above, the focus is on proving the violation of the rule and deciding what should be the punishment. This leaves the real victims out and in many ways, victimizes them again.

Example A: *One student hitting another student*. The rule has been violated and if we focus only on the rule violation, we miss the opportunity to repair the damaged relationship. What we really want is for the offending person, with the injured party, to recognize the violation and injustice, to repair the damage (physical and relational) as much as possible and to figure out how to prevent it from happening again.

Example B: *A student carving or writing on a school wall*. The problem is not just that the student has violated a school rule. The problem is also that the community has an understanding that we don't do things to deface each other's property and therefore has violated the community (adults and other students), the authorities charged with providing oversight, the maintenance person who now must divert attention from other projects to repair it, and taxpayers who must pay for it.

Example C: *A student talking rudely to a teacher*. The problem is not just that the student violated a school rule. The problem is also that the student has disrespected the teacher. If we focus only on the rule violation and punishment for the student, we leave the human violation unaddressed. The

relationship between the teacher and student has been damaged and unless it is repaired, the openness to teaching and learning will also be affected.

Principle 2: The primary victim of the misbehavior is the one most impacted by the offense. The secondary victims are others impacted by the misbehavior and might include students, teachers, parents, administrators, community, etc.

The victim language does not mean that they are helpless but that they were the ones who were on the receiving end who were impacted by the offensive behavior. It helps identify who would be have to be involved in order to determine the damage and to repair the damage (physical and relational). Many times our structures for discipline are completely oriented around the offender. Without intending to, we ignore the victim, leave them out of the response, and often rob them of the opportunity to deal constructively with the offense and heal the injuries.

Principle 3: Discipline that Restores (DTR) is a process to "make things as right as possible."

When a rule violation has occurred, principle #1 reminds us to pay attention to the human violation and not inadvertently ignore the real victim because our focus is only on the rule violation and how we should punish the offender. Principle #2 simply points out that the victim, the other one who needs to be included in the response, is the one most impacted by the misbehavior and might include other students, teachers, administrators, parents, etc.

Principle #3 says that our response, after recognizing the rule violation and the human violation it points to, should focus on "making things as right as possible." To make this the focus is a radical departure from most discipline systems. Most discipline systems assume that the rule violator has a problem and needs to be fixed. Generally, the preferred way to fix them is to punish them, to make them feel pain, and then to hope that that will cause them to act differently in the future.

In most discipline programs, the primary activity is between the rule violator and some authority. The authority points out what rule has been violated and that violating the rule means there is a consequence. In some programs, the authority might even say that by choosing to violate the rule, you have chosen this punishment because you know that this is the consequence for violating that rule. What you will notice is that the activity leaves out the victim, the one who was most impacted by the rule violation. In many discipline programs, the process is focused on deciding what rule was violated, who did it, and what punishment should be administered. But, DTR Principle #3 says that the focus of the process is to "make things as right as possible." To do this, we must look at the whole incident. DTR says that violating a rule is an indicator that

some relationship was violated. DTR identifies both who was harmed as well as who violated the rule. Both will be needed to decide how to make things right. The misbehavior creates needs and obligations. Deciding how to make things right is a radically different process from an authority deciding how to punish the offender. Everyone in the process experiences a significant difference when this shift is made. One of the differences is who is needed to make the best decision on how to make things as right as possible.

"Making things as right as possible" is very different from punishing the offender.

Principle 4: DTR recognizes both the danger and opportunity created by the misbehavior and conflicts that underlie the misbehavior. As soon as immediate safety concerns are satisfied, DTR views the misbehavior and conflict as a teachable moment.

The Chinese written language has a symbol that is made up of two symbols put together. When taken as a whole, it gets translated into three English words, conflict, crisis, and crossroads. When each of the symbols is translated separately, the one is translated into the English word, danger. The other is translated into the English word opportunity. So the language itself suggests that when we have a conflict, we are at a crisis point, and we are at a crossroads. Depending on how we respond to that situation, it may take us in the danger direction or in the opportunity direction. DTR principle #4 is intended to highlight this very important concept. It is intended to remind us that those who guide the response to misbehavior in schools have a huge responsibility. They are the ones who can influence this situation. The response process they design will largely determine if it leads in the danger or opportunity direction.

The danger is that the participants, the offender and/or all others impacted by the offense, emerge from the response further alienated, more damaged, feeling disrespected, feeling less respect for others, disempowered, and feeling less safe and less cooperative with other students and school officials.

The opportunity is that the injustice or violation and its impact are mutually recognized, a plan is designed to restore equity as much as possible, and a plan is created to address the future so that all participants are safer, less alienated, more empowered, and more cooperative with each other and the whole school community.

When I ask teachers and administrators to identify what they hope to accomplish with their discipline system, whatever system they prefer, I get very similar responses. We want students to: learn responsibility, learn to solve problems in a positive manner, learn respect for self and others, learn what is appropriate and what is not appropriate behavior, learn self control,

learn honesty, learn cooperation, learn that their decisions affect others, learn decision making skills, learn tolerance, learn respect for authority, learn that there are consequences for actions, learn empathy for others, learn not to hurt each other, learn better ways to express needs than defiance, etc.

The teachers who created this list had very different preferred discipline plans. When they completed the list, they were amazed that all of the things they wanted to accomplish could be written in terms of what they wanted students to learn. We observed that although we usually didn't think of it this way, we all wanted whatever we did to be a learning experience. We agreed that it would be very helpful to remind ourselves that each misbehavior is a teachable moment. What teachers found was that when they thought of misbehavior as a teachable moment, their response was different and the stress was significantly reduced. Discipline was no longer something off task, but an opportunity to substantially increase the student's Emotional and Moral Intelligence. In turn, since the student's discipline experience was constructive, they were more open to learning the other basic subjects.

Principle 5: Discipline that Restores prefers resolving the conflict or handling the misbehavior at the earliest point possible and with the maximum amount of cooperation (as little coercive force as possible.)

I have developed a model that I call Four Options For Handling Conflict (see figure a).

In the model, the I's are the ones in the conflict and might be two students or a teacher and student or two teachers or a parent and teacher, etc. The X's are outside parties that are not directly involved in the conflict. The circle or oval is around the one(s) that have the ability to make the decision or cause something to be done their way.

#1 indicates that one has the ability to dominate over the other. It might be because one has positional power, or one is bigger and able to intimidate, or one has a gun, or one for any reason has the ability to make it go their way.

#2 indicates that the one who makes the decision is the X or the outside party. It might be a teacher deciding for two students, or it might be a principal deciding for a teacher and a student, or any combination in which the outside party is the one making the decision.

#3 and #4 indicate that the decision is made together by the two who are in the conflict. This is what I refer to as a cooperative decision. In #3, the X helps the I's make their decision.

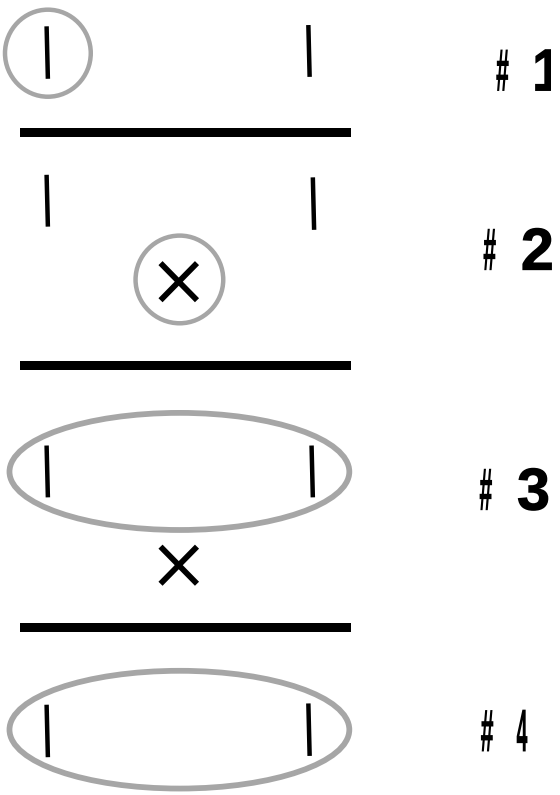


Figure a ©1995 Ron Claassen

Principle #5 simply indicates that Discipline that Restores prefers that we use options #3 and #4 as much as possible and use options #2 and #1 as back up when needed. This means that even if a person has the ability to be in the circle in the #1 method, they voluntarily choose not to do that and instead move into the oval with the other person in options #4 or #3. This principle is really about power and control issues. This principle says is that it is important for those who have the ability (because of positional power, size or information advantage, etc.) to use coercive power, to choose not use it except as needed and then only under carefully monitored conditions (this will be expanded on in Principle #7).

A teacher usually has many power advantages over the student. They have positional power, usually a size advantage, and usually a substantial information and experience advantage. Especially in the lower grades, #1 is very easy to use. But, the advantages begin to disappear as the students get older and bigger, etc. and the advantage may finally, in some cases, be reduced to positional power and may even be the opposite direction on some of the other items. This same transition happens between parents and their children.

So one reason for the person with the greater power to choose to use cooperation is the practical reason that if we discipline by control only, we are giving the message that when the power is in your favor, you are expected to use it. This of course leads to the classic power struggle which is very stressful, consumes significant energy, and diverts attention away from the primary task of learning. It is also at the root of violence.

I am especially concerned about adults using option #1 with small children as the only or primary way of responding to conflict or misbehavior. Even if we teach cooperative skills to students and even if we set up peer mediation programs for students, I believe that the unintended message is that cooperation (options #3 and #4) are for kids only and when you grow up and have the power, you no longer use options #3 and #4, now you use the adult way using options #1 and #2. To say it another way, what we do will speak louder than what we attempt to teach. The ideal, is that as adults we model cooperative skills and strategies, use a curriculum to teach cooperative skills, and develop structures to provide significant opportunities for students to practice, with both peers and adults.

One misunderstanding I often run into when presenting this to parents, bosses, or teachers who have positional power to use #1 is the following: moving from option #1 to option #4 often feels like moving within option #1 from being inside the circle to being the "I" outside the circle. It feels like you are giving your power away. But that is not what is happening. Another way of saying what we are doing when we move from option #1 to #4 is that we are moving from having "power over" to having "power with." In option #4, the teacher is not agreeing to anything that they think is not appropriate. The difference is that in option #4 the student is invited to help decide what is appropriate. There is no agreement until both agree. If that is not possible, then you move to a back-up option, #3, #2, or #1.

Principle 6: Discipline that Restores prefers that most conflicts and misbehaviors are handled using a cooperative structure directly between the ones in conflict.

A common resistance to this principle is "what about the misbehavior that is violent?" Most conflicts and misbehaviors are not serious violent episodes. In the criminal justice system, about 15% of all crime is identified as violent crime. This is even less in schools. Even if the misbehavior is a serious violent situation, the response should still be a restorative response. Safety needs to be assured for all parties and then the timing and strategy may need to be modified, giving the victim significant control in the process along with the system authorities.

Now lets look at the other end of the spectrum, the least serious misbehaviors. One of the problems with the standard retributive response is that it minimizes the least serious offenses. It seems that a punitive response is not appropriate or needed in this minor offense so instead of punishing, nothing is done. This permissiveness is a serious problem. It sends a wrong message. One of the unintended consequences is that it gives the message to victim, offender, and the community that the offense was not serious. It gives permission to violate people in small ways. It doesn't hold the offender accountable and ignores the victim. Often these minor offenses are very disturbing to the ones they impact. When nothing is done in response, it encourages retaliation by the one who was victimized and therefore starts the "more than an eye for an eye" escalation.

Discipline that Restores says that instead of just punishing the offender, our response should be to view this as a learning opportunity and search for ways to "make things as right as possible." In order to do that, we will have to include both parties. DTR suggests that the two primary parties are usually in the best position to decide how to do this. DTR provides skills and strategies to help make it more likely they will be able to do this. DTR suggests that if they can't do it alone (option #4) they may want to invite others to join them (still option #4) or it may help to provide a mediator (option #3).

One other resistance to this principle is from a person in authority, like a teacher, saying, "Do you expect me to bring myself to their level?" Moving from option #1 to #4 in one sense does mean being on the same level and in another sense does not.

To work at option #4 means that we do see the other party as having equal value. I think of it this way. I think that we all have infinite value in the eyes of God and I think that whether we work at #1 or move to #4 does not change that. Moving to #4 is one way of letting the student know that we recognize their value. But moving from option #1 to #4 does not mean that the roles should change. The teacher is still the one with the responsibility to provide overall leadership and is the one accountable for the overall learning and climate of the class.

Principle 7: DTR recognizes that not all persons misbehaving will choose to be cooperative. Therefore there is a need for outside authority to make decisions for the misbehaving person who is not willing to be cooperative. The consequences imposed should be tested by whether they are reasonable, related, restorative, and respectful.

An interesting part of using a cooperative approach to solve a problem is that by definition, you cannot force it. To use a cooperative approach you must invite the other party and wait for them to decide. If they choose to cooperate, the chances are very high that you can work out a mutually

satisfactory resolution. A difficult thing for a teacher is to wait for the student to make up their mind. A vice principal recently told me that the first time he tried using this approach, it seemed like he waited for ever. He said, "I was ready with at least three lectures. I'm comfortable with lectures but I found it very difficult to wait. Finally he said 'yes.' Actually, it probably wasn't even a minute."

The delay may be because they need time to consider this new approach. It may be that they need some information to make the decision. It may be that they need some encouragement and accountability. Perhaps, it is more likely that they will say yes to cooperation if they have assurance of a fair process or of enough support to make sure it is fair.

Unless there is an immediate safety situation that needs some authority to take appropriate action to restore safety, it is worth taking the time needed to explore options that might help the person change their mind and decide to try a cooperative approach. So a good question to ask is, why not? Students sometimes tell Roxanne when she asks why not, "if you punish me, I don't have to keep making and keeping these agreements." With a bit more discussion, they usually decide they want to participate in the decision.

If there is a decision not to cooperate, that means it leaves outside authority (#2) and coercion (#1) as the only options. Coercion actually means that the adult makes a decision or the student is allowed to make the decision (permissiveness is coercion with the student in charge). Whatever is decided, I believe it should meet some criteria to guide how the authority or coercion is used. Jane Nelson in *Positive Discipline* suggests that an imposed decision should be respectful, reasonable, and related. I would add it must also be restorative and intended to also reintegrate. If our punishments or logical consequences or whatever we choose to call them meet these five criteria, they will elicit a different response than if they don't. I believe that the difference will be observable in both the one administering and the one receiving. I think that authority and coercion used in ways that don't meet these criteria are on the abuse side of the continuum.

So DTR is not suggesting that there is no authority or coercion, just that you prefer to not have to use it. And, when you do use it, it should be administered with a commitment to be constructive, even if the other is not yet constructive, and in ways that are reasonable, respectful, related, restorative, and (re)integrative.

Principle 8: DTR prefers that persons who misbehave and are not yet cooperative be continually invited (not coerced) and encouraged to become responsible and cooperative, and they should be given that opportunity at the earliest possible time they so choose.

If what we do to a student, because of their misbehavior, stigmatizes and ostracizes them we have created a greater problem for them and for us. Remember that each misbehavior is a teaching/learning opportunity. If we miss that opportunity and instead of helping them learn to successfully participate and find appropriate ways to meet their needs, they will meet them in some other way. Everyone needs a reasonable sense of power over their lives, to be cared for, and to feel like they belong. Our discipline process should help them learn how to do that in ways that are socially acceptable. If they think someone is picking on them, how do they appropriately address that problem? If the rule seems unfair, how do they appropriately work to change the rule?

We cannot afford to give up. If we simply put a student out of the class or out of the school, we have not helped them learn. An unintended consequence of a discipline system that stigmatizes and ostracizes students is that we are preparing them to be good members of fringe groups and gangs.

Instead, we must let them know that we care and continually invite them to join in the process of figuring out how to solve this particular problem and in the long run to join in making the world a better place for everyone.

Principle 9: DTR requires follow up and accountability structures since keeping agreements is the key to building a trusting community.

Trust, or more often the lack of trust, is often associated with conflict and especially with a student who has been identified as a behavior problem. Usually it goes something like this: "the problem here is that you just can't trust _____." The work of a good discipline program should be to help people turn that around to where significant trust is reestablished and getting higher. From my experience working with individuals and groups to help them build trust and from analyzing special activities designed to build trust, I have found the following to be a helpful and reliable guide. "Trust grows when agreements are made and kept. Trust goes down when we are either unwilling to make agreements or when we make agreements and are unwilling to keep the agreements." (Claassen 1992) So, if you want to have a trusting relationship, you need to have clear agreements and clear ways to know that the agreements are being kept.

If you want to establish a trusting relationship with that most difficult and disruptive student or any person you feel you cannot trust, start by inviting them to join with you in making and keeping agreements.

When Roxanne makes an agreement with one of her students, they always set a follow up meeting. At the follow up meeting, they read the agreement and

decide if they have both been keeping their agreements. If they have, they celebrate. If they haven't, they talk about and decide what is keeping them from being able to keep the agreement. It might be that one did not try hard enough. It might be that one forgot. It might be that one understood the agreement to mean something different from the other. It might be that one needs some additional help. If needed, a new agreement is written that clarifies expectations and increases the accountability and support to the point where both believe that the agreement can work for them. Then, another follow up meeting is set. Some agreements call for several follow up meetings and some need only one.

I am often asked if a follow up meeting is necessary if things are working OK. Because of time constraints, it often seems more efficient to not have a meeting. But the problem with not having a meeting is that a significant trust building opportunity is missed. Trust goes up a bit when we make an agreement and it continues to grow when we keep the agreements. But it grows most dramatically when we acknowledge together that we are both keeping the agreement. It is an opportunity that I think we cannot afford to miss. Even in relatively minor situations, I would suggest that it is best to error on the side of having the meeting rather than not having it.

The more experiences we have making and keeping agreements, the more trust we will have in our classroom or community and the more likely we will be willing to try to use a cooperative approach when the next conflict or injustice confronts us.

So, if we are serious about building safe families, safe schools and safe communities, peacemakers will seek out those situations where trust is low and invite them into a process of making and keeping agreements. If we do, trust will grow. Stress will be reduced and the potential for violence will be decreased.

Another way of saying this is that if we have a lot of experience making and keeping agreements as a means of solving our problems and dealing with injustices, the trust that has been built makes it less likely one of us will use a violent response.

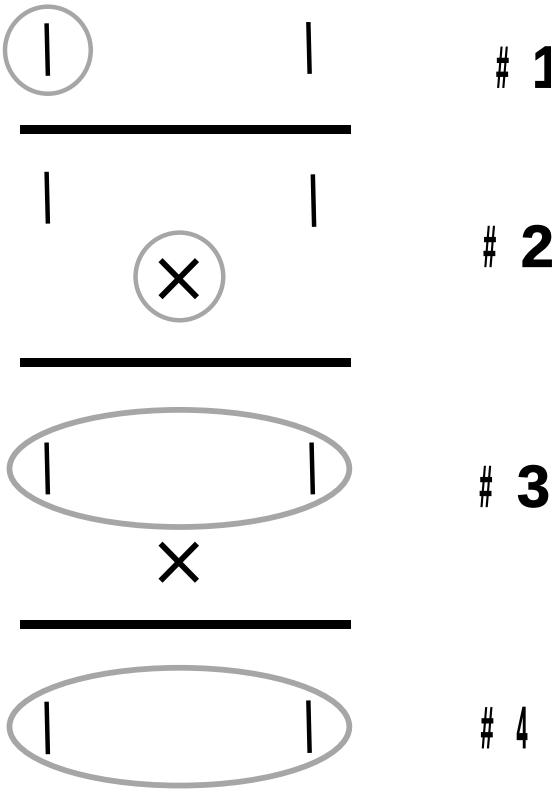
Let me tell a story from a teacher who used the Victim Offender Reconciliation Program Peacemaking Model (Claassen 1987), slightly modified for Student/Teacher conflict. In one of my classes designed to help teachers and counselors learn to work constructively with conflict, after they have learned some skills and strategies, I give the assignment to seek out their most difficult student or most troubling conflict situation and invite that person to consider using a cooperative process to try to resolve the problem. .

The following is the experience of one teacher. You will notice that she was one of the participants in the conflict and also led the process. That same week I received 18 similar peacemaking stories. This could be happening in all of our schools.

"I teach high school and I am a pretty good authoritarian. I've been pretty skeptical of this cooperation stuff."

"J____ has been disruptive all year. Every time I start a lesson, he does something to disrupt and distract me. I have gotten to the point where I am happy if he is absent. I'm not proud of that but that is how I feel. When the class assignment was given, I knew right away which student I should try to work with. But I had tried everything including warnings, detentions, pulling cards, and setting up a contract with his parents present. I didn't believe that he would respond to this process either so I set out to prove that it wouldn't work. I had a student teacher with me so when J____ started to disrupt, I counted to ten, controlled myself, turned over the class, and invited him to go outside with me."

Introduction, purpose, and groundrules: "I took my binder with me and told him I had been learning a process for resolving conflicts and I wanted to show him something. I showed him the 'four options model' and explained #1 Coercion (one dominates and the other goes along) #2 Outside Authority (an outside person makes a decision for those in conflict), #3 and #4 Cooperative Agreement (there is no agreement unless both agree, #4 just the two of us, #3 we ask a mediator to help us.) Then I told him I would prefer #4 but I wondered which he would prefer. Without hesitating, he chose #4. That really made me mad. If he wanted to be so cooperative, why had he been so disruptive all year? I counted to ten and went to the next steps in the process. I stated the purpose of the meeting as being to search for a good resolution for both him and for me. I asked if he could agree to that purpose for our meeting. Again, he said yes. We both agreed to the ground rules."



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Recognizing the Injustice/Violation/Conflict: "Then I asked him if he wanted to start, if he wanted me to start, or if we should flip a coin. He said he wanted to start. I asked him to describe how he has been experiencing our conflict (it was difficult for me to say our conflict because I wanted to put all of the blame on him). He said, 'when you start a new lesson, you talk so fast I can't keep up and when I do something, it slows things down.' Now I really needed to count to ten again. Could it be something that simple? I really had to control myself from not giving him a lecture. But there was a ring of truth in what he said. I do talk fast and English is not his first language. I followed the process and summarized what he said and he really seemed to appreciate it. Now it was my turn. I told him how disrespected I feel when he interrupts and disturbs our lessons. I told him that I dread starting a lesson when he is there in class. I told him that I am not proud of it, but what was going on between us had caused me to be thankful when he was absent. I hope we can change that. I had just rambled on and forgot that he would have to try to summarize it all. He didn't and he did a very good job of summarizing. I appreciated his willingness to listen and summarize what I had said."

"The process calls for us to move now to what it would take to restore equity and what future intentions need to be clarified in order to make things as right as possible. We decided to work on the future first."

Future Intentions: "We each wrote down a few ideas that we thought would prevent our problem in the future. We agreed that I would slow down my speech when introducing a new lesson, giving instructions, etc. and he would try as hard as he could to keep up. If I was forgetting and still going to fast, we devised a signal that he would use to remind me. If I didn't want to slow down or repeat at that point because it seemed like most of the class was getting it; I would give a signal back to him. That would mean that I would meet with him individually and for now he would just try to pick up what he could. Then, when the others started working independently, I would go over the material with him alone. We agreed that this should take care of our problem for the future."

Restore Equity: "We each wrote down a few ideas that we thought would help make things right between us now. We decided that both of us would apologize to each other, and we did it right then. We also decided that we both needed to apologize to the class because we had wasted a lot of their time by not having worked this out earlier in the year. We did that before the end of the class period. We recorded our agreements and we both signed it. We were both feeling much better now than when we started. I told him I would make a copy and give it to him immediately after lunch."

Follow up Meeting: "Included in the agreement was a time set for our follow up meeting, two weeks from the date of the agreement. The purpose of this

meeting, I told him, was to pull out the agreement and read it together and then we would each answer the questions: Have I been keeping my agreements? Have you been keeping your agreements? If one says no, we will clarify our expectations or renegotiate our agreement with more accountability built in. If we both say yes to both, we will celebrate. We didn't say how but I think just a handshake along with our great feelings of accomplishment will be enough."

"I set out to prove that this process wouldn't work with my most difficult student and I was really wrong. It worked great. He has been like a different person. I have felt like a different person. And the whole class seems to be working together better. They are still kids and we still have some usual class stuff but this has made a great improvement. I actually enjoy seeing him walk into the class now. On the one hand it seemed to take a long time, maybe a half-hour, but we have made up that time in just the week since our agreement. Thanks for the process."

Blessed are the Peacemakers

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