

What are restorative practices?

Restorative practices are, broadly speaking, processes and routines designed to repair relationships. They seek to separate the behaviour from the moral integrity of the participants, to elicit remorse and to prompt a change in behaviour.

How does Prahran High School use restorative practices?

PHS uses restorative practices to repair relationships between community members. We also use restorative practices when supporting individual wellbeing, as we cultivate a sense of self compassion. These practices are most commonly used after conflict between students, between staff and students, or between staff. The principles remain the same, regardless of the participants. When a conflict has occurred, there has been a rupture in a relationship. Restorative practices seek to repair this relationship and require us work together to restore our sense of community.

Restorative practices can be used whenever there has been a relationship rupture- for something as simple as a student ignoring a teachers' instructions, right through to a physical altercation between students and beyond. At PHS, relationships are central to everything we do, and as a result whenever there is conflict, it should be addressed through the strengthening and renewal of a relationship.

What theories or philosophies underpin restorative practices at PHS?

UPR- The concept of Unconditional Positive Regard requires us to see the inherent worth and dignity in everyone. This is important in relation to restorative practices because it is easy to see this worth and dignity in others when we are getting along, or when someone is behaving how we expect, but is much more difficult when there is conflict. All participants in a restorative process need to be assured that they are respected, cared for and valued, regardless of what has transpired. Without this firm baseline, any attempts to explore concepts of responsibility, forgiveness and restitution will ignite feelings of shame and fear.

The work of Desmond and Mpho Tutu- Widely known for their work in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in post-apartheid South Africa, Desmond and Mpho Tutu have created a 'fourfold path' which takes participants through the process of forgiveness. This process asks us to choose healing over harming and gives us a structure for moving through the process of reconciliation with those who have harmed us. It also highlights our interconnectedness and builds our empathy by emphasising our common humanity.

The work of Dr. Harriet Lerner- Dr. Lerner's work teaches us how to apologise, and the importance of listening. **Finish this when you get the book.**

The work of Brene Brown- Brene's distinction between shame and guilt ensures processes of restoration are constructive and contribute positively to a persons' character. She defines guilt as adaptive and helpful- the experience of psychological discomfort when we've done something that doesn't align with our values. Shame however is an intensely painful feeling of unworthiness of belonging and connection. At PHS, restorative practices are designed to enhance feelings of belonging and connection, whilst highlighting dissonance between values and actions.

The Prahran High School Process for Restorative Practices

NOTE- this process can (and should, for more serious situations) be conducted with individuals first, before bringing both parties together to repeat the process.

Explain the process to participant(s)

- Today we are meeting to understand what has happened, and to hear how we can move forward together.
- In any situation of conflict, everyone has been hurt somehow. This is an opportunity to explain how this situation has impacted you, but also to listen to how other people have been impacted.
- You will each get an opportunity to tell the story of what happened. During this time, you will not be interrupted.
- You will be asked to either apologise or grant forgiveness. You may need to do both.

Explain the expectations to the participant(s)

- The facts are less important than the impact it has had on the people involved
- The conversation in here is private. We trust each other to keep the things we share in here private.
- We listen without preparing our defence
- We speak with honesty and care

Where appropriate, have participants connect first

- Remind them of a time where they were friends, enjoyed something together, or of something they have in common

Tell the Story- regaining dignity, and understanding our hurt

- Each participant tells the story of what has happened
- Wherever possible, have participants stick to outlining the facts of the situation. Avoid asking 'why'.
- Indicate that you are listening and believe what they are saying through your body language

What happened from your perspective?	Who was there?
Then what happened?	What did they say?
Where were you when this happened?	Did that happen before or after?

Name the Hurt

- Each participant names the emotions and feelings they have experienced
- You may wish to have them use the emotion wheel to better articulate their emotions (see below)
- Take time to unpack this slowly with each participant. Show the participants how you listen closely and acknowledge their feelings, without challenging their right to feel them.

How did that make you feel?	Did that change how you felt?
What did that bring up for you?	How strongly did you feel that?
What impact did this have on you?	Were there any other feelings for you?

Seek and Grant Forgiveness

- Ask each participant what they'd like to apologise, or accept responsibility for
- Wherever possible and appropriate, all parties should find something they can apologise/accept responsibility for.*
- Ask each participant to forgive the other, or to accept their apology.
- Discuss whether any further reparations need to be made. Does anyone else need to be apologised to, or forgiven? Does anything need fixing (a ball replaced, a mess cleaned up)?
- Create a plan for the future. What might we do next time to prevent conflict?

What would you like to apologise for?	Is that something you can accept?
Was anyone else affected?	Next time, what might it look like?
How can we repair this together?	What can you do differently?

Renew or Release the Relationship

- Discuss together something they learned about the other person
- Discuss together something they have in common with the other person. If possible, have them connect over a similar *emotional* experience to the one you've just shared (rather than a similar experience). For example, ask whether they have also experienced frustration, or if there has ever been a time when they were jealous.
- Express gratitude for the way everyone participated in the process.

What have you learnt about ____?	Was there a time where you felt _____?
In what ways are you both similar?	Did anything good come out of this situation?
What can we learn from this experience?	What do you admire in _____?

*finding an opportunity to take responsibility for or apologise for something can be a very powerful way of modelling to a student how adults apologise. No matter how small, finding something to 'own' when conducting restoration with a student can act as an equaliser and help to open up a student to apologising themselves.

What if...

- **Someone won't apologise?**

Simply put, there is no point in 'forcing' someone to apologise. Instead, spend more time in the second step of Name the Hurt. Spend time eliciting their feelings and having them consider the feelings and emotions of the other people involved. Acknowledge that it can be incredibly difficult to admit when we're not proud of something we've done. Ensure that the person can separate the action from their self-worth- *'doing something silly doesn't make you a bad person', 'punching someone doesn't mean you are a violent person'*.

Apologising is often seen as weak, when we know it's one of the strongest things a person can do, because it is incredibly challenging. Sometimes, changing the language to 'accepting responsibility' can help to ease this concern.

The hurt party can also practice forgiveness without an apology. They can choose this path over holding onto the hurt and anger caused. Ask the hurt party if this is something they'd like to express. Sometimes, this can also help the other person to seek forgiveness.

- **Someone won't offer forgiveness?**

Forgiveness acts as a tool to free both the 'guilty' party and the person who was hurt. Forgiveness is a gift given to the self. Talk to the person who won't offer forgiveness about how holding onto the negative emotions is harmful to themselves, as well as the other person and our community more broadly. It is about letting go.

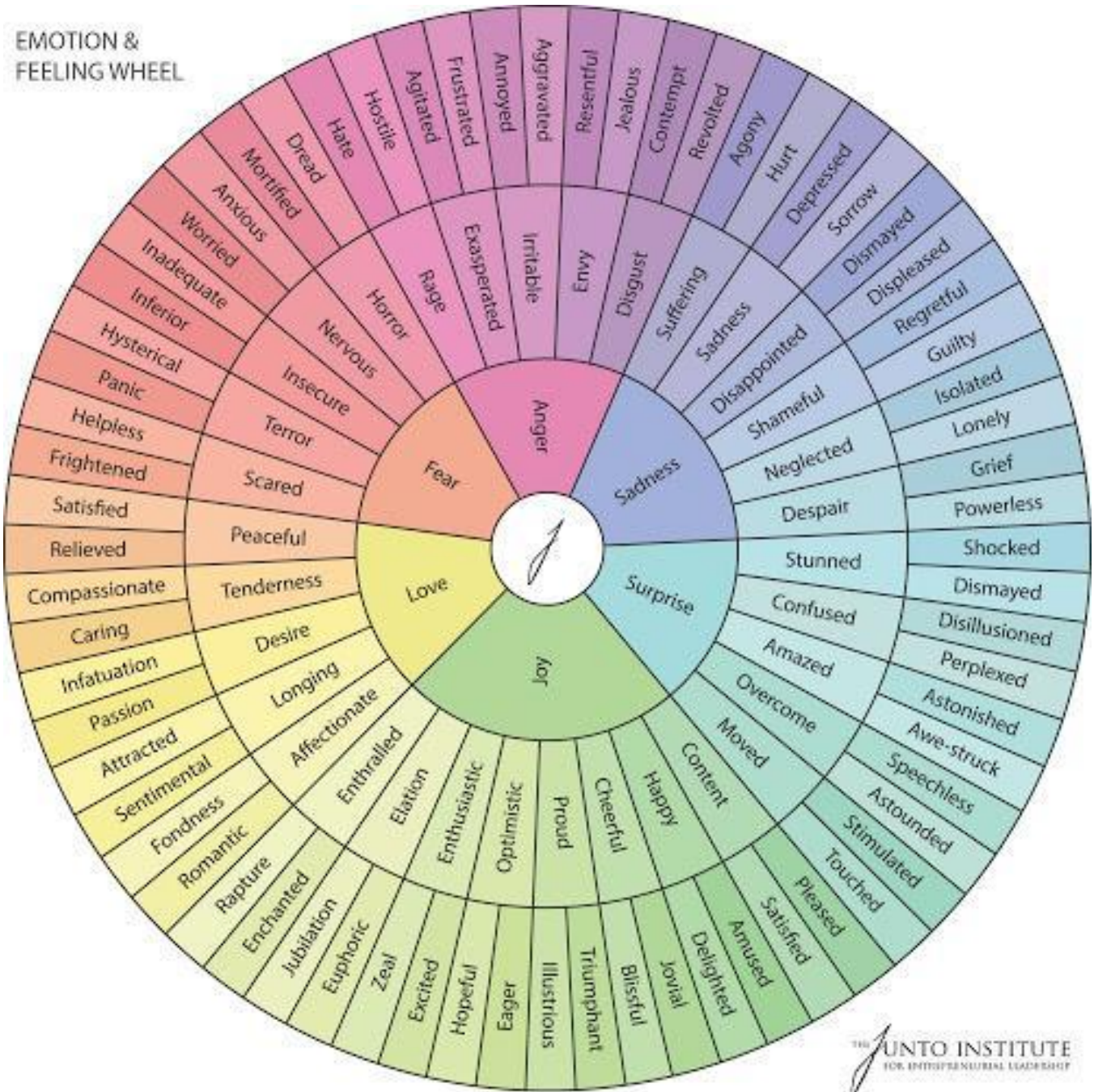
Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting. We can however forgive and let go of the hold hurt has over us, whilst still remembering the circumstances. Explain to the student how when we forgive, we give ourselves the opportunity to move past the situation or the hurt.

- **An apology feels fake or contrived?**

This can often be avoided if there has been individual conversations prior to the restorative conversations. Give students an opportunity to practice what they will say, and how they will say it. Give feedback- remember this is a big learning process for them.

Younger students are still learning how to apologise. Many of them have not had apologies properly modelled for them. Rather than chastising their delivery in the moment, it can be worth accepting the apology as it comes, and then afterwards talking to them in more detail about how they can improve their apology. **See below some important things to remember when apologising**, and talk to the student about these.

EMOTION & FEELING WHEEL



Restorative practice- what and why

Restorative practices- a framework to follow with scripting

Restorative practices- how to use them pro-actively

- practice forgiveness in small ways and gratitude daily
- praying for people who irk or irritate you, or your enemies
- Giving and taking meditation- Dalai Lama

Restorative practices- how do we apologise (to come)