

RACE TO RESTORE

RestorativeTeachingTools.com

OBJECTIVE

Participants will be able to differentiate between different restorative processes and will understand when to employ each one in their community.

MATERIALS

You will need a stack of short scenario descriptions that would be best addressed by different restorative processes. We generally include two scenarios that are a good fit for a Restorative Justice Conference, two scenarios that are best for a one-on-one Restorative Conversation, and two scenarios that are best addressed by a Circle (six scenarios total). You will need a few copies of each scenario (as many copies as you will have relay teams). They should be lined up on a table face down with numbers on the back, so that each relay team can easily grab them. You will also need to write on a whiteboard or on large pieces of paper, spaced apart from each other, the name of each restorative process option (“Restorative Justice Conference,” “Restorative Conversation,” and “Circle”) so that participants can race to the appropriate process for each scenario.

INSTRUCTIONS

Start by offering a quick review of the restorative processes that you are engaging with in the activity and a reminder of the basic guidelines for when to use each process.

Next, decide on how many teams you need for your total group size. If you have 12 people or less in the class, two teams will work well. If you have more people than 12, divide by the six scenarios in order to find the ideal number of teams so that everyone has at least one chance to play. For example, if you have 22 people, it will be best to have four teams, and two people will get to play twice.

Have the pieces of paper with the scenarios lined up face-down on a table. They should be labeled on the back side, so that each team has a row of scenarios labeled #1, #2, #3 and so on. Team members line up relay-style behind the table.

Explain that when you say “go” the first person in the relay line for each team will grab the scenario #1 paper in their row and will read it to themselves quickly and then race to one of three restorative processes written up on the board, touching the scenario to the name of the process to symbolize the restorative tool they are choosing.

After each team member has chosen the restorative process they think is appropriate for the scenario, the first person that arrived to a process reads the scenario and explains why they chose the restorative process they did. If there are conflicting opinions, have the other teams' racers explain why they chose the process they did. Game facilitators determine which restorative process is the most-correct answer (while acknowledging good points that were made during each person's explanation) and award one point to the team that arrived at the correct tool first.

Once a point has been awarded, say "ready set go" for the second person in each team's relay line who will grab scenario #2, quickly read it, and then race to the process that they feel is the best fit. Repeat the process of reading the scenario out loud, discussing the choices that were made, and awarding a point. Repeat until all six scenarios have been discussed and each participant has gotten at least one turn.

If you have differing levels of physical ability in your group that make it difficult to actually "race" to the different restorative processes, please modify the activity accordingly so that all can easily participate. For example, you could mark circles on the floor labeled as the different restorative processes ("Restorative Justice Conference," "Restorative Conversation," and "Circle") and give participants bean bags to toss at the process they choose. If there are differing reading levels present, you could read the scenarios out loud and then have them race to the process they think is most appropriate. It is always worth making an effort to change activities to make them as inclusive as possible!

DEBRIEF

What are you taking away from this activity? What tools do you have to help you determine the best restorative process for a given need?

LESSON

Restorative practices contain a wide range of restorative processes that are used to build, maintain, and repair relationships. As a facilitator, it is important to have a grasp of which process is best suited for which need, and to be willing to modify a process when required.