



May 12, 2043
Harris Centre Synergy Session
Faculty of Education,
Memorial University,

RELATIONSHIPS FIRST: RETHINKING THE FORMATION OF SCHOOL CULTURE

Thanks to...



Social Sciences and Humanities
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Canada 

What we'll be doing...

- ⦿ What is restorative justice in education?
- ⦿ What is Relationships First:
Implementing restorative justice from the
ground up?
- ⦿ Stories of impact
- ⦿ Your ideas



- To thrive, youth and adults alike need to be loved;
- to be loved we need to belong.
- When we belong, we learn to trust, and when we trust we experience our interconnectedness.
- Educational institutions have significant potential for nurturing cultures of belonging.
- Yet, in spite of our best efforts, students, educators, and parents often experience school culture as alienating and fear-based so that learning is limited.



Andrew



School Culture

- ◎ “the way we do things around here”
 - Martin, 2006



Current culture

- Inclusion
- Safe and Caring Schools
- Mental health
- Bullying
- Space for addressing *who we are...*



What is restorative justice?

Judicial context

- ⦿ Ancient and contemporary indigenous and spiritual traditions;
- ⦿ Mark Yantzi (1974);
- ⦿ Circle conferences
 - Those who caused harm
 - Those who were harmed (directly & indirectly)
 - Their supporters
 - Facilitators



DIFFERENT QUESTIONS



Adversarial

What rules have been broken?

Who did it?

What do they deserve?

Blaming

Restorative

Who has been hurt?

What are their needs?

What needs to be done for the harm to be repaired?

Relational



- ⦿ Adversarial approach: *the more you punish the less likely they will do it again;*
- ⦿ Restorative approach: *the stronger the relationship the less likely we will act inappropriately towards each other (IIRP, 2000)*



Restorative justice in education

Worthy



Relational

Well-being nurtured by one another



Restorative Justice ...

- A philosophy of social engagement nurturing:
 - Interconnectedness
 - Trust
 - Belonging
 - Love
- By engaging with one another so that the worth and interconnectedness of all human beings is honoured at all times.



A RESTORATIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

Social control to social engagement

Focuses on:

- **Relationships** instead of rules & behaviour
- **People** instead of policies
- **Honouring** instead of measuring
- **Well-being** instead of success
- ...

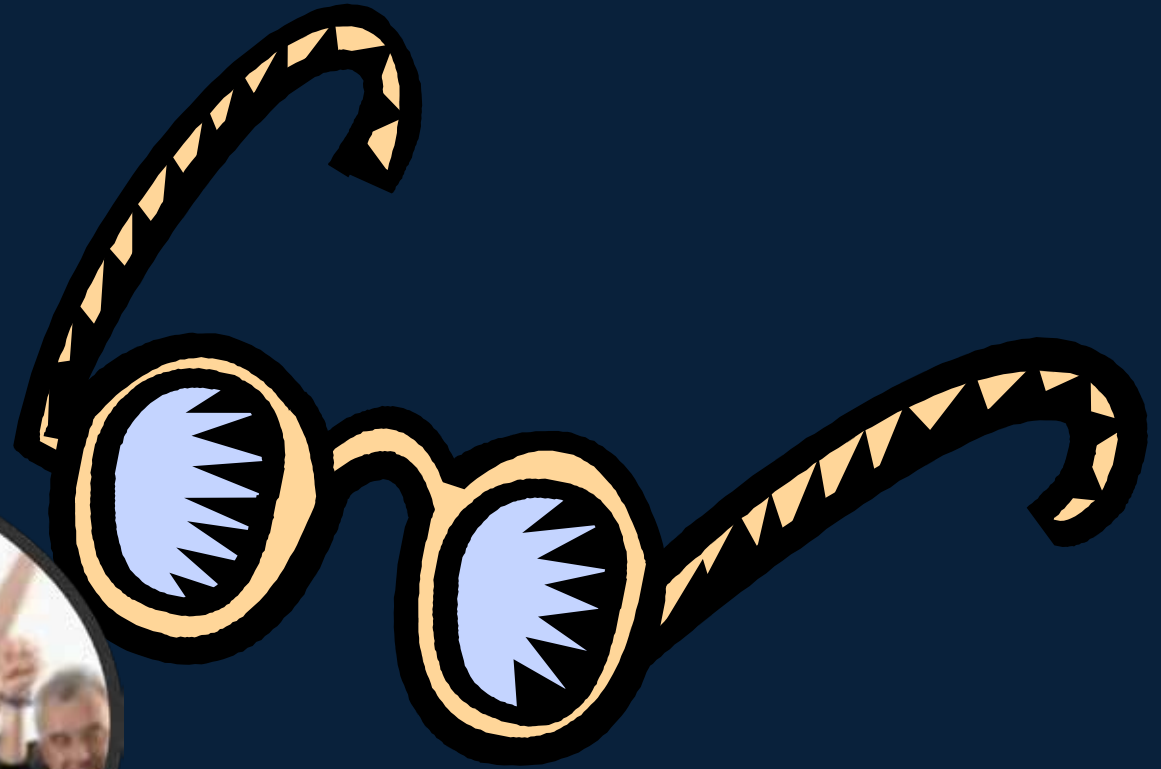


Changing Lenses

Lenses that measure ...



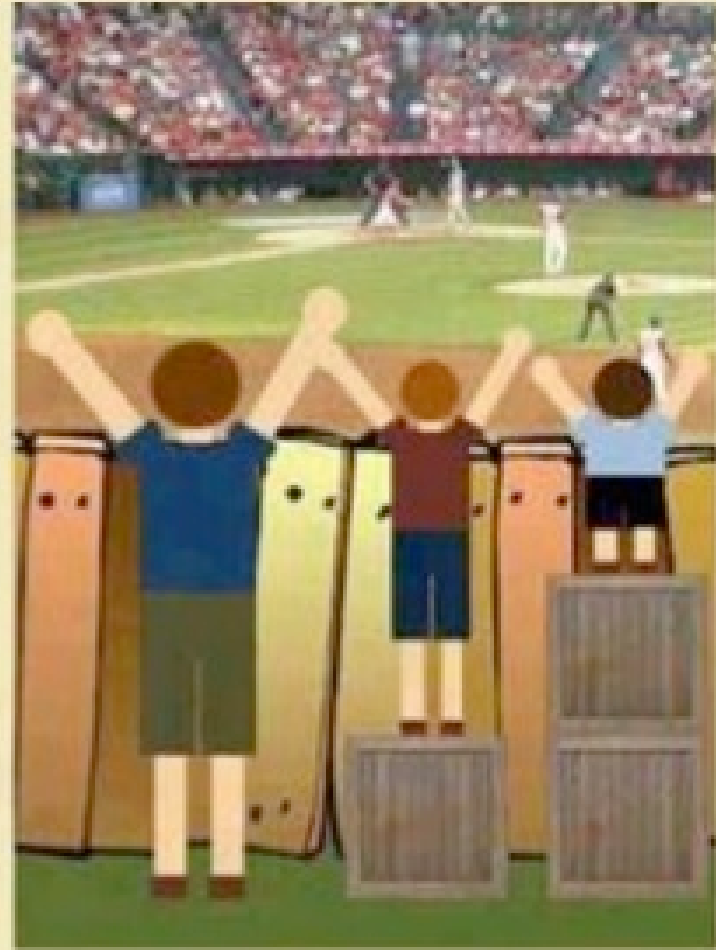
Lenses that honour



Fairness doesn't mean Justice



Fairness

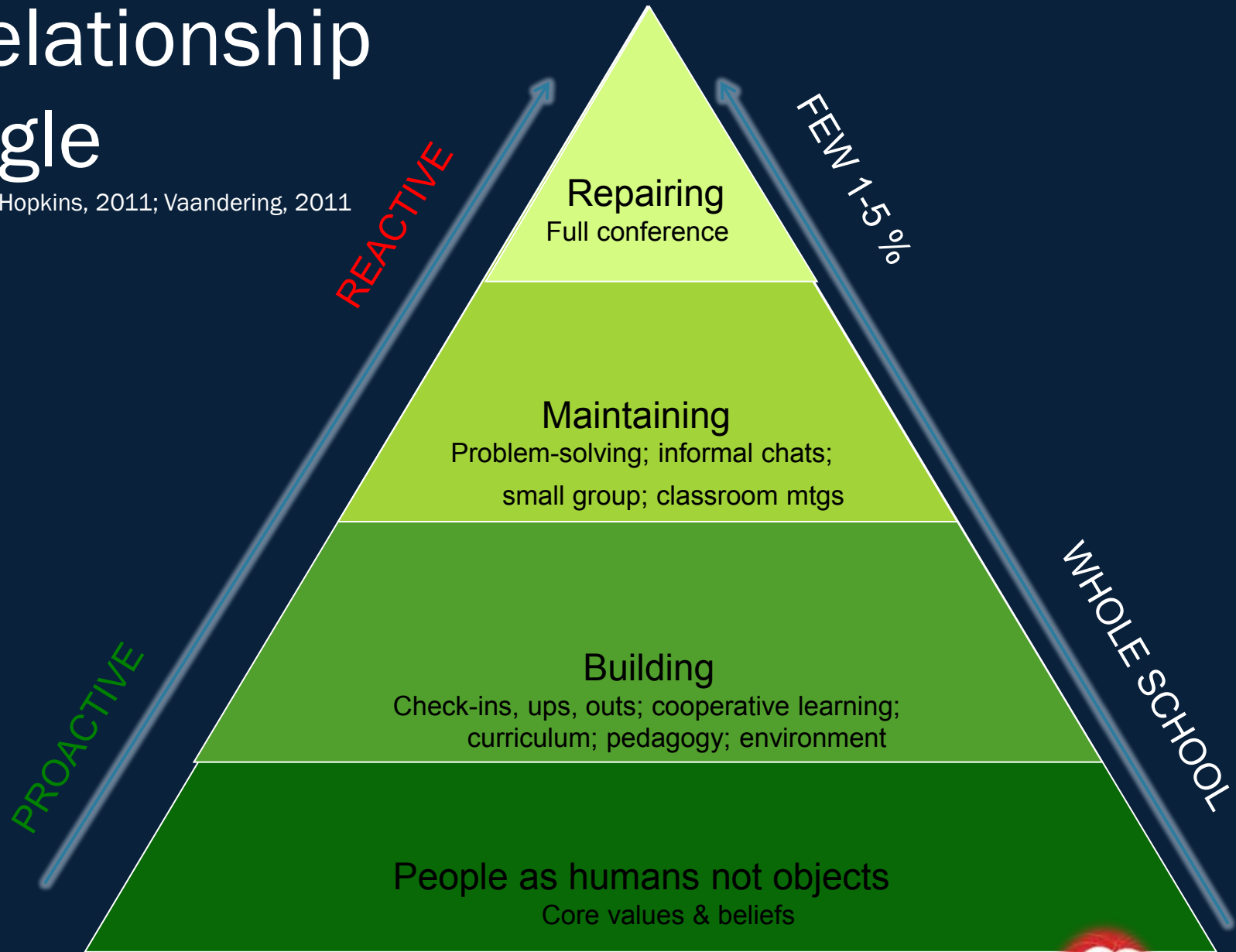


Justice



RJ Relationship Triangle

Morrison, 2007; Hopkins, 2011; Vaandering, 2011



A Continuum of Practice

Adapted from McCold and Wachtel, 1999

PROACTIVE ----- REACTIVE ----- PROACTIVE

- Adult interaction—
board/admin/staff/parents
- Staff meetings
- Committee meetings
- Pedagogy
- Curriculum units
- Integrated into
curriculum

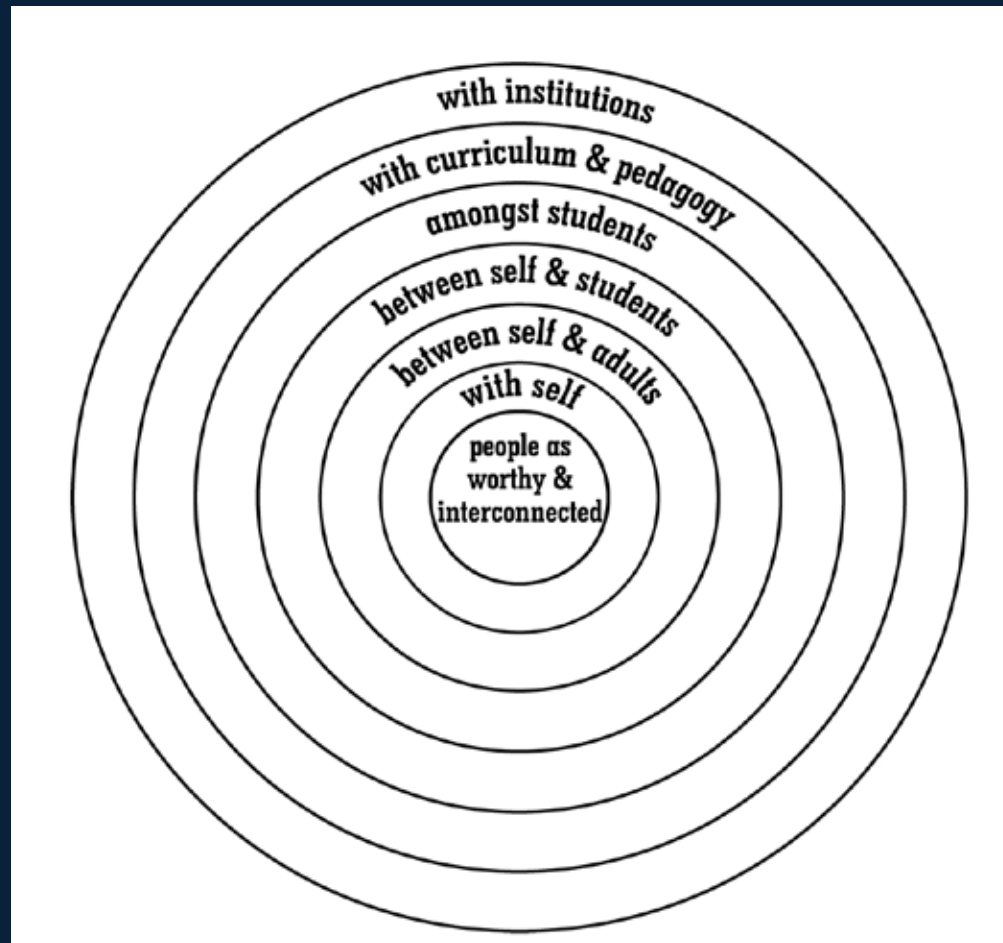
- Affective Statements
- Affective Questions
- Small impromptu
conference
- Large group
- Formal Conference

- Classroom Meetings
- Check-in, up, out
circles
- Physical Environment
- Active Listening
- Cooperative Learning
- Etc.

Relationships First: Rethinking the Formation of
School Culture May 12—Harris Centre Synergy
Session D. Vaandering Ph.D.
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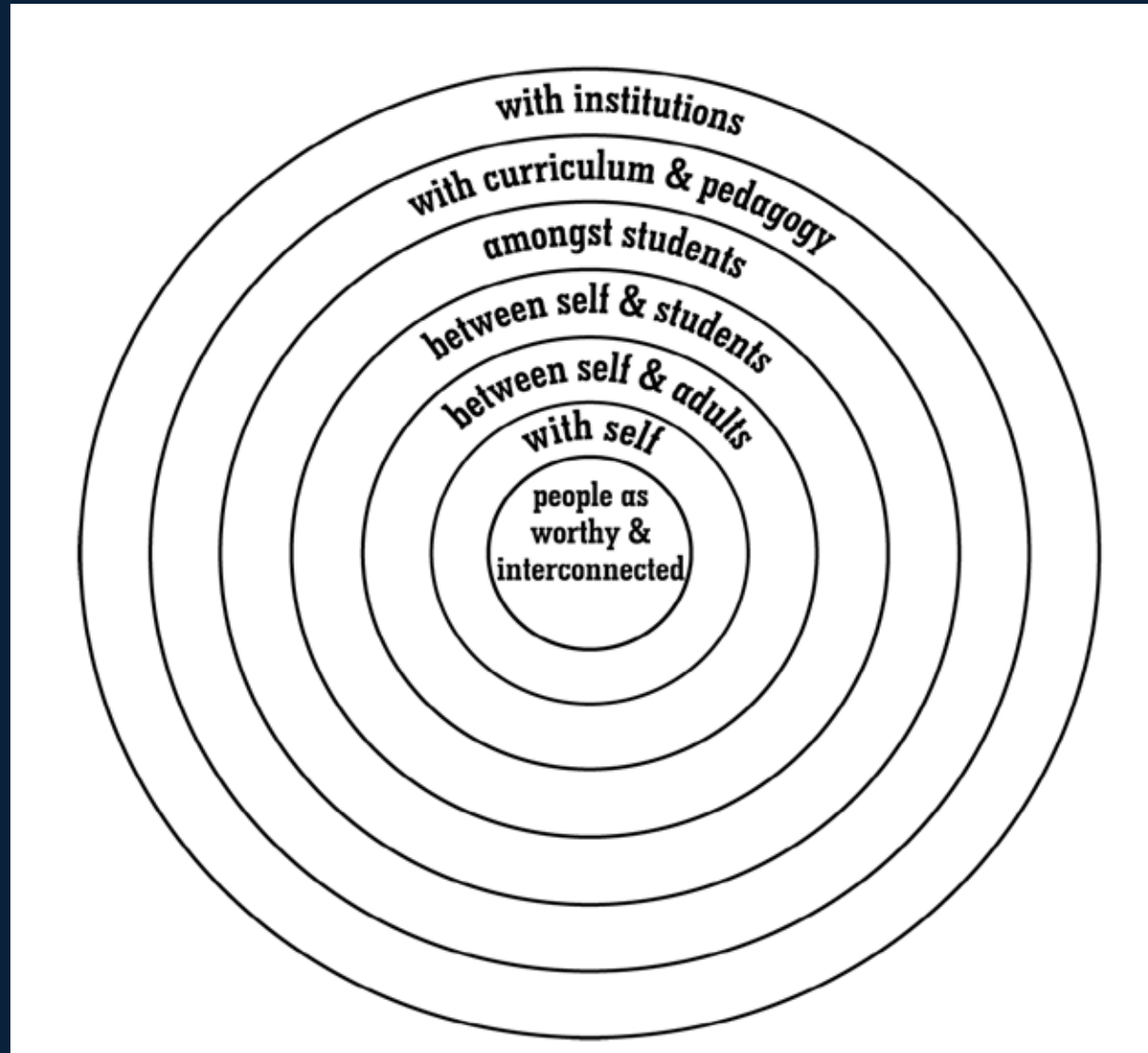
Relationships First: Implementing Restorative Justice from the Ground Up



Participant	Place of employment	Role
Alice (+15)	High school-A	Vice principal
Betty (+10)	High school-A	Special education teacher
Cathy (+5)	High school-A	Librarian/teacher
Donna (+10)	High school-A	Classroom teacher
Eva (+15)	Junior high-A	Classroom teacher
Fay (+20)	Junior high-A	Guidance counselor
Ian* (+15)	Junior High-B	Vice principal
Greg (+15)	Primary-Elementary school--A	Guidance counselor
Helen (+5)	Primary-Elementary school--A	Grade 2
Jolene* (+10)	Primary-Elementary school---B	Classroom Teacher
Karin* (+15)	Primary school--D	Vice principal
Lori (+5)	Primary-Elementary schools E & F	Itinerant music teacher
Matt (+10)	Independent school K-12	High school teacher
Nathan (+10)	Independent school K-12	School chaplain
Owen (+10)	Independent school K-12	Jr. high teacher
Peter (+5)	Social Service agency	Program facilitator- youth absent from 'regular' school
Roy (+5)	Social Service agency	Program facilitator- youth absent from 'regular' school



Stories of impact



What we realize ...

- ⦿ Lots of potential
- ⦿ Ground up is significant ...
- ⦿ People are interested and asking ...
- ⦿ Ways forward ...



Questions/comments/ideas...



Consortium

(Lead Partner)

- ⦿ Association of two or more groups participating to enact a common goal.
- ⦿ Joint steering committee—representatives from each member organization
- ⦿ Shared partnership at all levels
- ⦿ Lead Partner hosts – funding apps; managing of funds and contracts; etc.



When the shoe fits, the foot is forgotten
When the belt fits, the belly is forgotten;
When the heart fits, *for* and *against* are forgotten.
~Chuang Tzu

Thank you for coming.

