



Relationships First: Creating relational school cultures with restorative justice

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**RESEARCH EXCHANGE GROUP ON BULLYING &
HEALTH**

NL Centre for Applied Health Research

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

12:30pm- 2:00pm

Acknowledgements

- The land
- “we are broken within the context of relationship; we are healed within the context of relationship.” H. Nadjiwan

- *This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.*



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

And...

- MUN's Faculty of Education



- Relationships First: RJE Consortium of NL



Overview

- Context
- Key principles of restorative justice education
- Restorative justice research overview
- Video: Ripples of Relationship
- Introduction to: Relationships First Consortium in NL
- Q & A

Context

- ...creating school environments where children and adults have healthy relationships can lead to lower levels of victimization and bullying. (White, 2014)
- “Students and teachers felt safest in schools where teachers view parents as partners in children’s education, where teachers offer academic support to students, where students trust their teachers, and where teachers trust their principals. Those relationships are even more important than neighborhood crime and poverty in predicting school safety...” (Skiba, et al., 2014)

- US Departments of Education, 2014; Indiana University, 2014; West Ed,
- PREVNet: bullying is a relationship problem that requires relationship solutions (Pepler & Craig, 2014; Morrison, 2013)
- Mitchell & Sackney, 2009
- Vaandering, 2010-present

- If we know strong relationships make a difference, *what is happening that is making it difficult to make change?*

- Schools often are still built on “traditional assumptions of schooling organized, structured, and operated not to foster learning but rather to cultivate compliance. (Mitchell & Sackney, 2009, p. 8).
- ... power dynamics of institutional space are important ... bullying is the systematic abuse of power ... we need to look at it from a systems level. (Morrison, 2013)

- Horton, (2014)
- We are using a 'macro lens' to examine the current concerns



In the past --zoom lens *mobbing



We need a wide-angle ...





... that acknowledges:

- the social context of aggression, the relational factors
- bullying often reflects larger social and political battles, moral panics, and collective anxieties.
- That the dominant discourse on bullying is built on and maintained by a simplistic conceptualization of power that reduces it to the individual level, as if some individuals hold power and others do not.



... that acknowledges:

- Social climate promotes bullying by structuring relationships around competition, dominance and conformity, all the while confining students to social groupings that are not of their choosing ... (Yoneyama & naito, 2003, p. 325)

A wide angle lens takes into account the context of the situation.

How can restorative justice in education make a difference?

It is **not**:

- A school discipline policy
- A way to control student behaviour
- A student code of conduct
- A packaged program

It **is** a philosophy that:

- Honours the worth of all regardless of who they are or what they do;
- Recognizes the importance of community in individual lives;
- Believes healing of relationships is possible.



What is restorative justice?

Paradigm Shift



Worthy



<http://harunyahya.com>

Relational

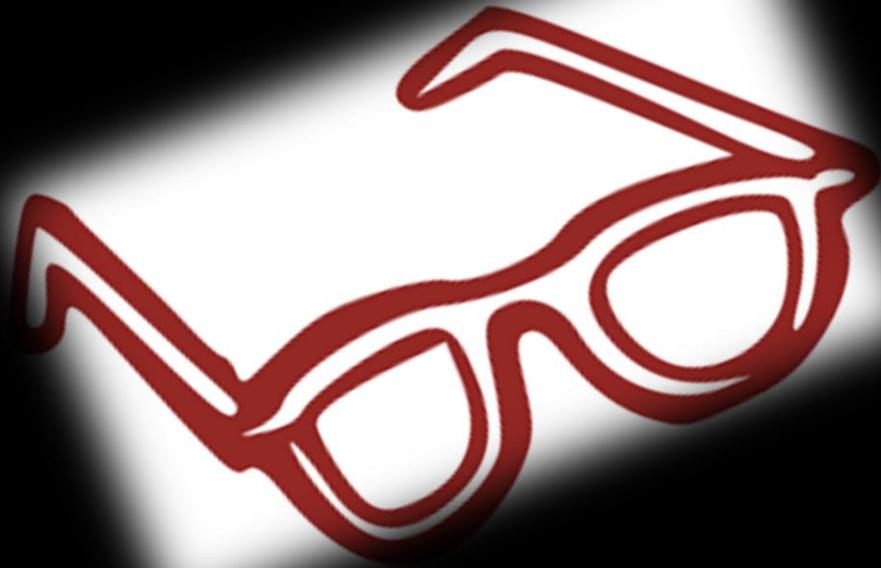
Well-being nurtured by one another





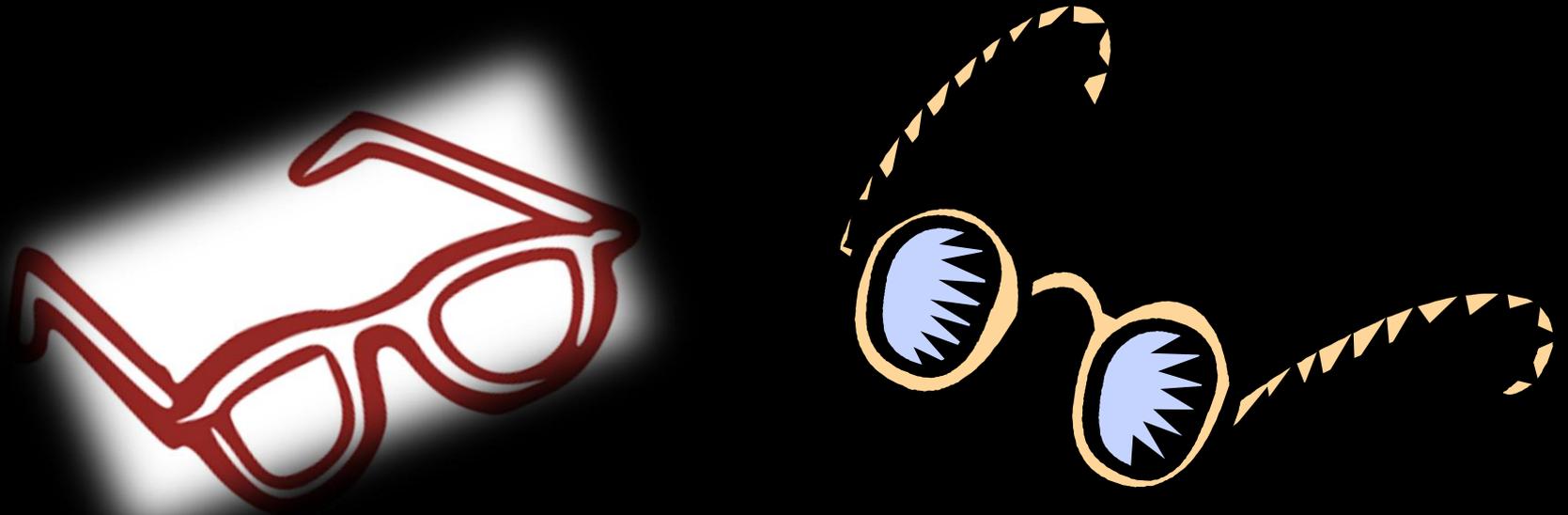
Changing Lenses

Lenses that measure ...



Lenses that honour





Am I measuring?
Am I honouring?
What message am I sending?



RJ Foundation

- Rooted in spiritual and indigenous traditions;
- Interconnected, relational view of the world:
 - Human beings are profoundly relational (Pranis, 2007);
- Lost through enlightenment--rational, individualism;
- Lost in a focus on right and wrong



- **Primary Justice**

- present in social relationships when no one is wronged, when the worth of the other is placed in the forefront of our attention
- Social justice

- **Secondary Justice**

- Addressing the situations where wrong/harm has occurred

Wolterstorff, 2008

Relationships before Rules



Current perspectives

Judicial context

- Mark Yantzi (1974)
- 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)*





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



Rj acknowledges:

- justice as **honouring the inherent worth of all**
- and is enacted through relationship.
- When something occurs that undermines the well-being of some, a space is provided for dialogue whereby the dignity of all involved and affected can be restored
- so that each can once again become a fully contributing member of the community of which they are a part. (Vaandering, 2011)



Restorative justice in Education is...

- learning that nurtures the capacity of people to engage with one another and their environment in a manner that supports and respects the inherent dignity and worth of all within their environments.



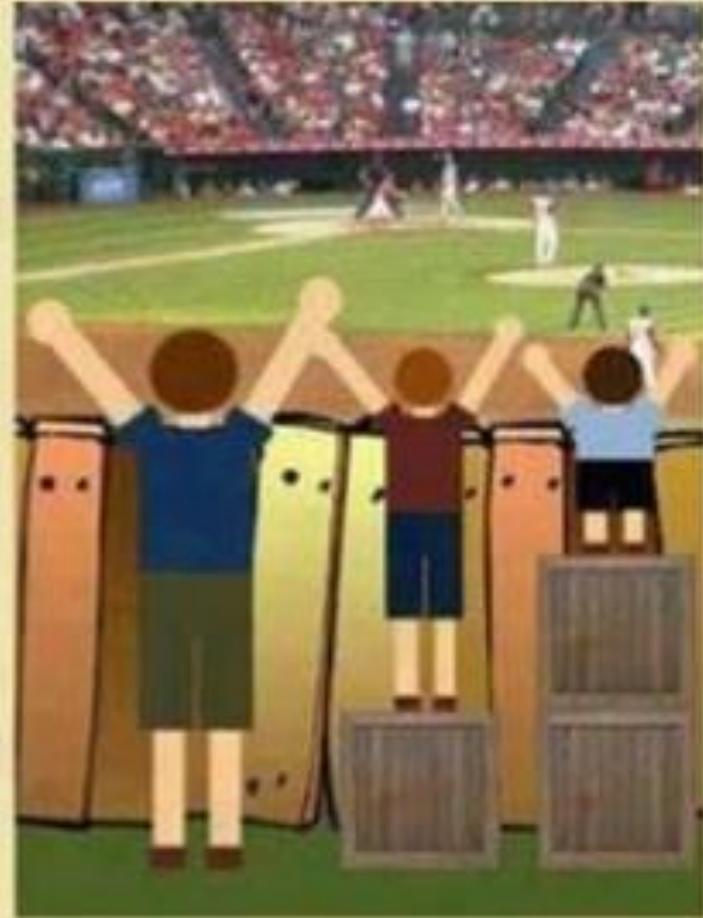
- **Relationships** before rules & behaviour
- **Connection** before correction
- **Asking** before telling
- **Well-being** before success
- **People** before policies
- **Honouring before** measuring
- **Problem-solving** before transmitting knowledge
- ...



Fairness doesn't mean Justice

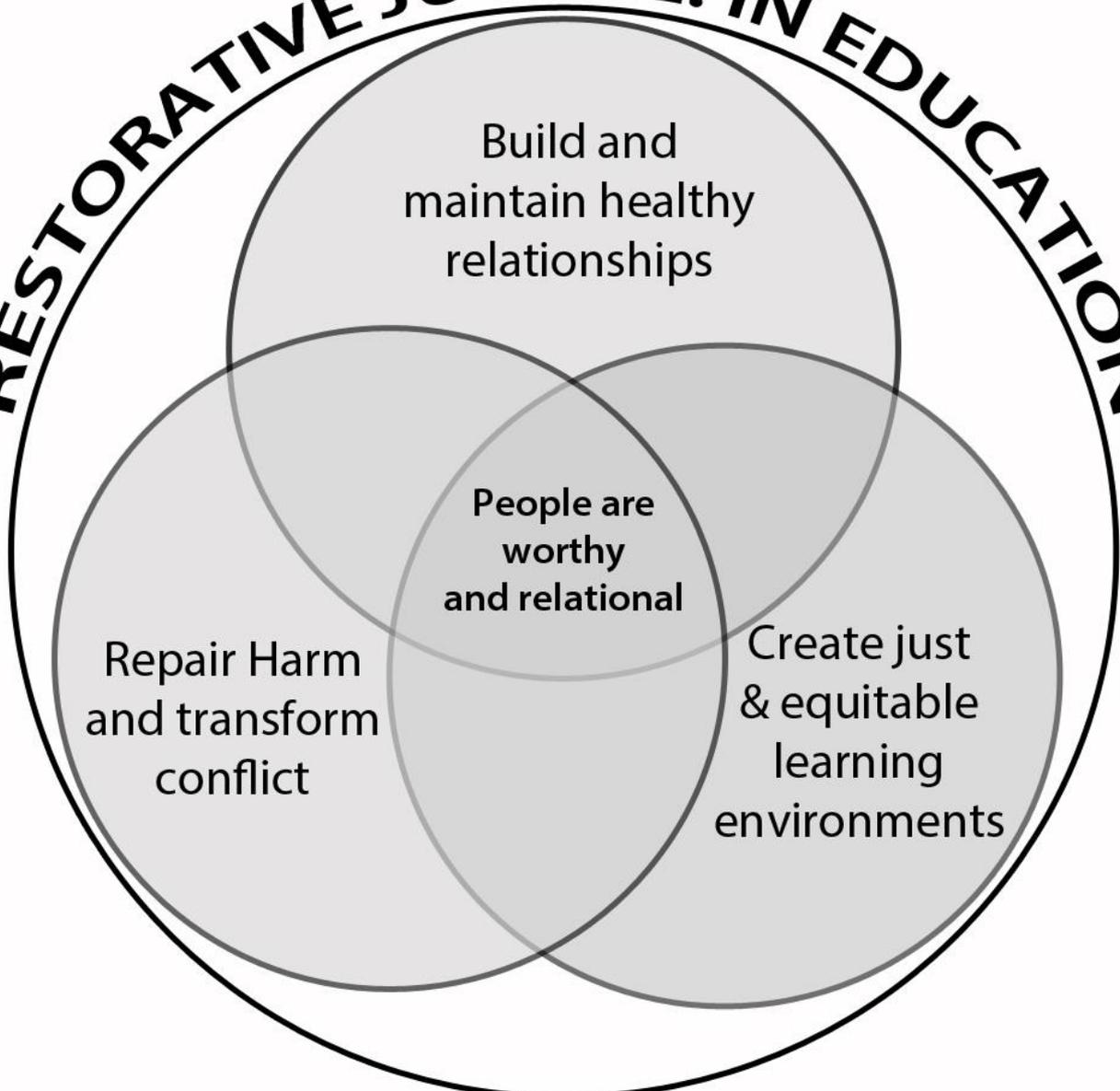


Fairness

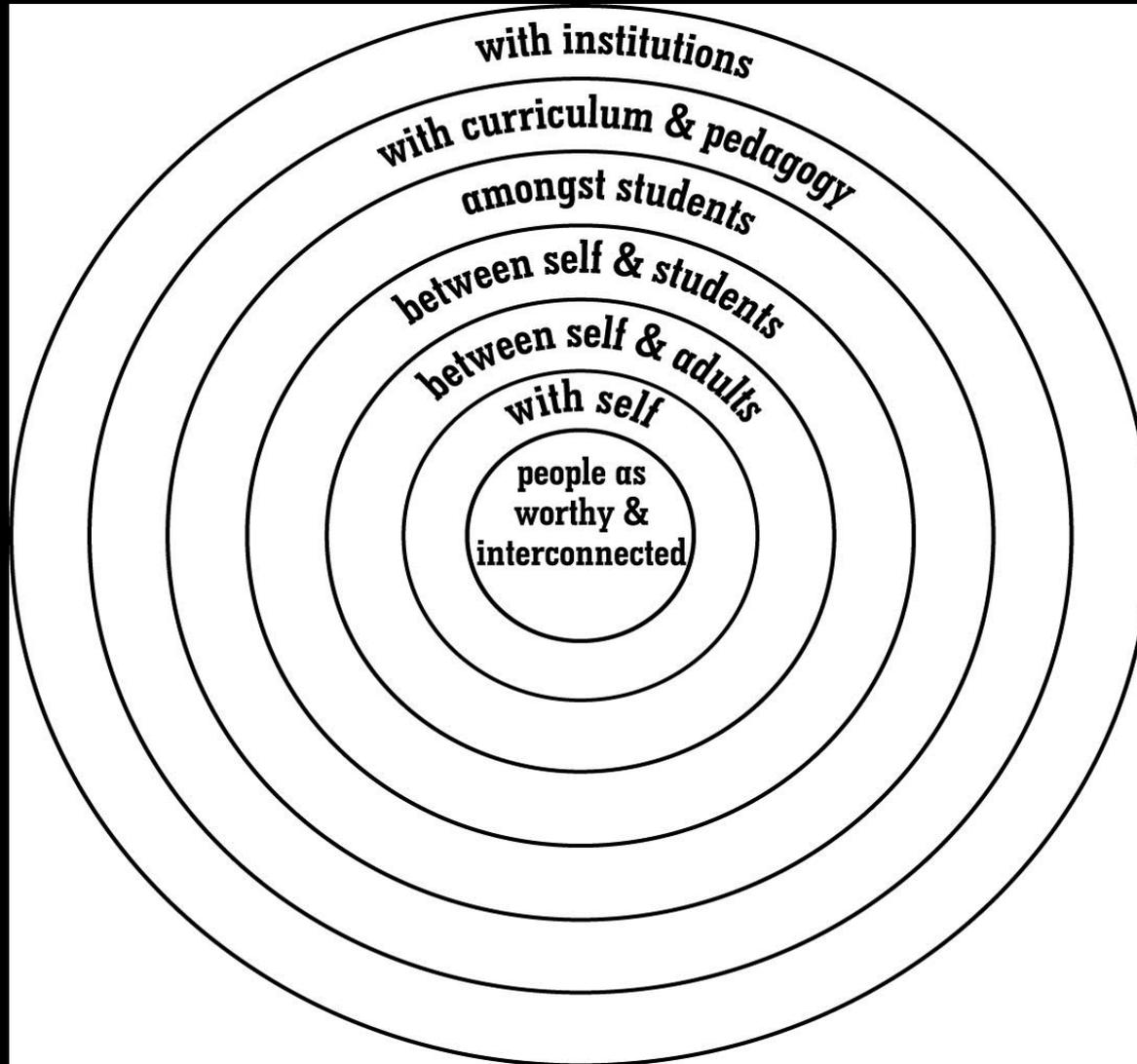


Justice

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: IN EDUCATION

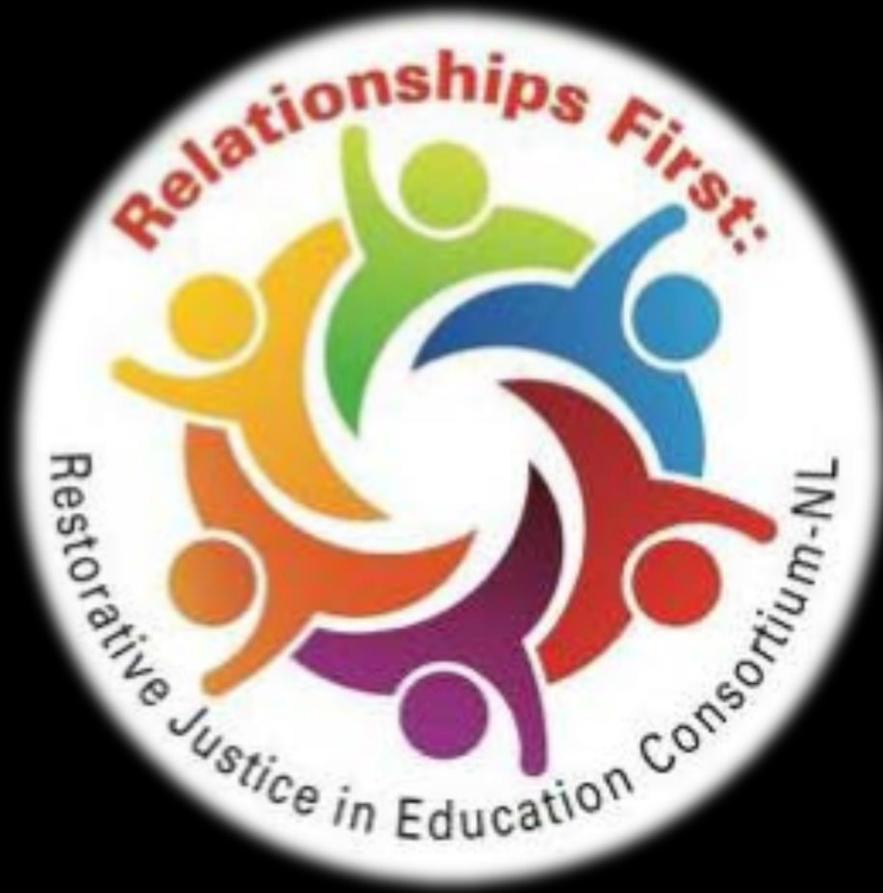


Relationships First...

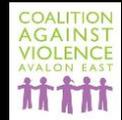


Ripples of relationship

- <http://relationshipsfirstnl.com/video/>



ST. BONAVENTURE'S
COLLEGE





The RF Consortium:

- envisions communities where the inherent worth and well-being of all involved are honoured and promoted. It recognizes the significance of authentic relationships in the healthy development of youth in NL.
- aims to nurture and support relational organizational cultures where children, youth, and adults alike thrive.
- promotes, supports, and encourages:
 - creating and sustaining relational educational cultures in NL;
 - the development of relational policies within a variety of organizations engaged with youth;



Welcome!

In 2013, 17 educators in Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) embarked on a two-week long institute to explore the possibilities of Relationships First: Restorative Justice in Education. Beginning with an exploration of their own core beliefs and values, the educators dug deep to reflect on the many relationships that make up their school community and began their journey toward creating and sustaining healthy, inclusive relationships in schools. Since then, many others involved in education in NL have discovered the benefits of restorative justice in schools. In 2014 Relationships First: Restorative Justice in Education Consortium* was formed and engaged a wide variety of education stakeholders within and outside of the traditional schooling systems.

This website is designed as a resource to help us in our journey toward building healthy, inclusive school cultures by putting Relationships First. We share our insights and experiences on this site in hopes of learning together with others globally. Please explore the site, send us feedback, and share your ideas.

Check out the video [Ripples of Relationship: Educating with Restorative Justice!](#)

Upcoming Events

- October 24: 9:00-3:00: Corey's Point, NL: One-day introductory workshop. [More info-click here!](#)
- Oct. 27, 28: RF-RJNL Official Launch events-Stay tuned for details.

What's New?

- This website! Yay!
- RF-RJNL for Newfoundland and Labrador!
- See Brochure: [RF-RJNL Brochure](#)

Share Your Experience

Do you have a story to share about your experience with restorative justice? We would love to hear from you! [Click here!](#)



<http://relationshipsfirstnl.com>



“Restoring Justice Together”

RF Consortium Launch

November 19, 2015

7:00-9:00 PM

Bruneau Centre-MUN

Featuring:

- Dalhousie dental
- Panel of local educators

Thank you!

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