

Restorative Practices

A Conversation Guide for Organization Leaders

This guide equips leaders with practical applications of restorative practices to cultivate a supportive workplace culture that addresses daily needs, strengthens relationships, and enhances emotional well-being. By prioritizing connection, understanding, and accountability, leaders can foster a sense of belonging and trust, ultimately promoting resilience within their teams.

Understanding Restorative Practices

Restorative practices focus on building community, repairing harm, and restoring relationships. Leaders can create a culture of accountability, open communication, and empathy, which nurtures individual growth and supports both personal and collective well-being.

Practical Applications of Restorative Practices

Establishing a Restorative Culture

- **Create Norms:** Set clear expectations for respectful communication, active listening, and constructive feedback.
- **Use Circles:** Implement regular circle meetings where team members can share experiences, voice concerns, and celebrate successes.
 - **Example Questions for Circles:**
 - “What has been a recent challenge, and how can we support you?”
 - “What positive experience did you have at work this week?”

Addressing Conflicts Restoratively

- **Conflict Resolution Meetings:** When conflicts arise, facilitate a meeting between affected parties to discuss feelings, needs, and possible solutions.
- **Use a Restorative Script:** Guide the conversation with the following prompts:
 - “What happened from your perspective?”
 - “How did this situation affect you?”
 - “What do you need to feel supported moving forward?”

Encouraging Reflection and Accountability

- **Reflection Sessions:** Schedule regular check-ins for team members to reflect on their experiences and growth.
- **Accountability Agreements:** Collaborate on creating agreements that outline commitments to improving team dynamics and individual responsibilities.
- **Example Follow-Up Questions:**
 - “What have you learned about yourself in this situation?”
 - “How can we hold each other accountable for our commitments?”

Ready-to-Use Interventions

- **Well-Being Circles:** Implement bi-weekly circles focused on well-being and connection, allowing team members to express their thoughts and feelings in a safe environment.
- **Empathy Mapping:** Use empathy maps to understand team members' feelings, needs, and challenges. This visual tool encourages empathy and fosters connection.
 - **Template Prompts:**
 - What I see: Describe the situation from your perspective.
 - What I feel: Share your emotions about the situation.
 - What I need: Identify what you need from the team to feel supported.

Promoting Continuous Growth and Support

- **Training and Workshops:** Offer training sessions on restorative practices, emotional intelligence, and effective communication to equip leaders and team members with essential skills.
- **Feedback Loops:** Establish mechanisms for continuous feedback on team dynamics and the effectiveness of restorative practices. Consider using anonymous surveys or open forums to gather diverse perspectives and ensure all voices are heard.

Additional Resources

For a deeper understanding of restorative practices, consider resources like *The Little Book of Restorative Justice* by Howard Zehr, relevant scholarly articles, and workshops on emotional intelligence and team dynamics.

