



Restorative practices in prison colleges and services

Connecting European Penitentiary Training Academies

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Welcome to Ireland!
Is it your first time here?





Restorative practices in prison settings
Dr. Ian D. Marder

Research with prisons and prison officers
Dr. Joe Garrihy



Training recruit prison officers
Dr. Fionnuala Brennan and Paraic Rooney

Day 1 Schedule

09:00-09:15	Welcome and Introduction (JF)
09:15-11:15	What are Restorative Practices in Prison Settings? (IM)
11:15-11:30	Coffee
11:30-12:45	Restorative Practices and Prison Cultures (JG, IM)
12:45-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:00	Restorative Practices Training (PR)
15:00-15:20	Coffee
14:20-16:45	Restorative Practices Training (PR)

Day 2 Schedule

09:00-09:20	Sum Up Day 1 (JF)
09:20-11:00	Restorative Practices Training (PR)
11:00-11:30	Coffee
11:30-13:00	Restorative Practices Training (PR)
13:00-16:00	Lunch
14:00-16:30	Restorative Practices as Pedagogical Tools (FB, IM, PR)



What are restorative practices in prison settings?

Checking in

Introduce yourself and tell us something you love about where you're from.

Checking in

What would you do if you didn't work in the prison service?

Take a second to think before we go around.

Checking in

Circles – the importance of turn taking, passing and not feeling required to say something similar or different.

Think about the goals of your work.

What would you like to get out of these two training days?

Take a second to think, and we'll go around.

Checking in

Circles – the importance of turn taking, passing and not feeling required to say something similar or different.

Think about the goals of your work.

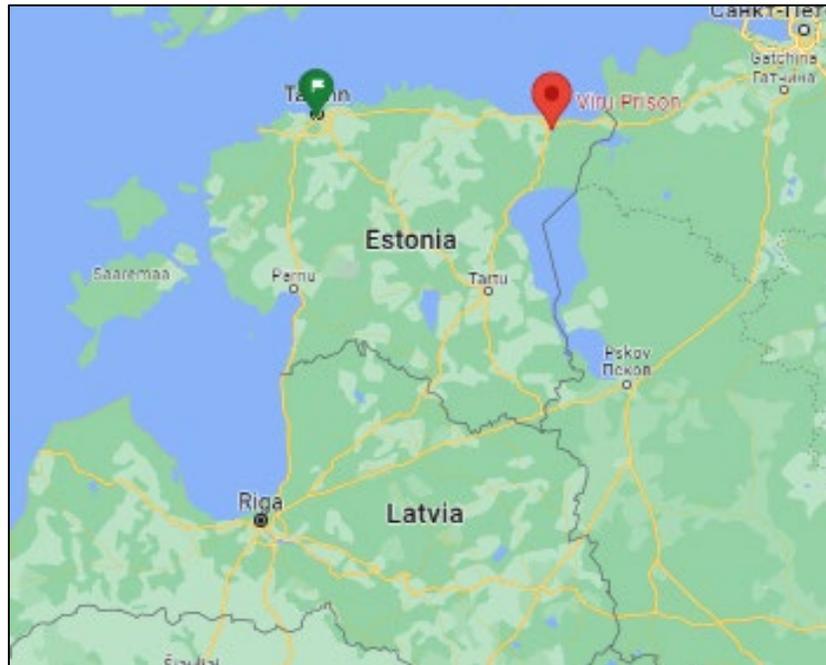
What would you like to get out of these two training days?

What similarities and differences did you hear there?

What did we do there and why?

Building relationships and encouraging reflection

Circles to build understanding
in Viru Prison – Jõhvi, Estonia.



Thinking big...

☰ **CNN** politics The Biden Presidency Facts First 2022 Midterms

Susan Collins had senators in bipartisan meetings use talking stick

By Lauren Fox and Daniella Diaz, CNN
Updated 4:58 PM EST, Mon January 22, 2018

Facebook Twitter Email Print



Capitol Hill
8:31 AM ET



SHUTDOWN BATTLE **LIVE**

SEN. COLLINS USED A 'TALKING STICK' IN SHUTDOWN NEGOTIATIONS **CNN**

9:31 AM PT

TODAY ATLANTA 53° CHARLOTTE 63° WASHINGTON 62°

HIS ABUSING THEM ► NASSAR ADMITS SEXUALLY ASSAULTING & ABUSIN NEW DAY

What are restorative practices?

Language and practices that help us:

- **Develop positive relationships** in a community
- **Understand** each other's needs and perspectives
- **Solve problems to prevent conflict** from occurring
- **Resolve conflict** in a healthy way when it arises

NOT the same as restorative justice – but appears in Council of Europe Recommendation (2018) on restorative justice in criminal matters.

Restorative principles

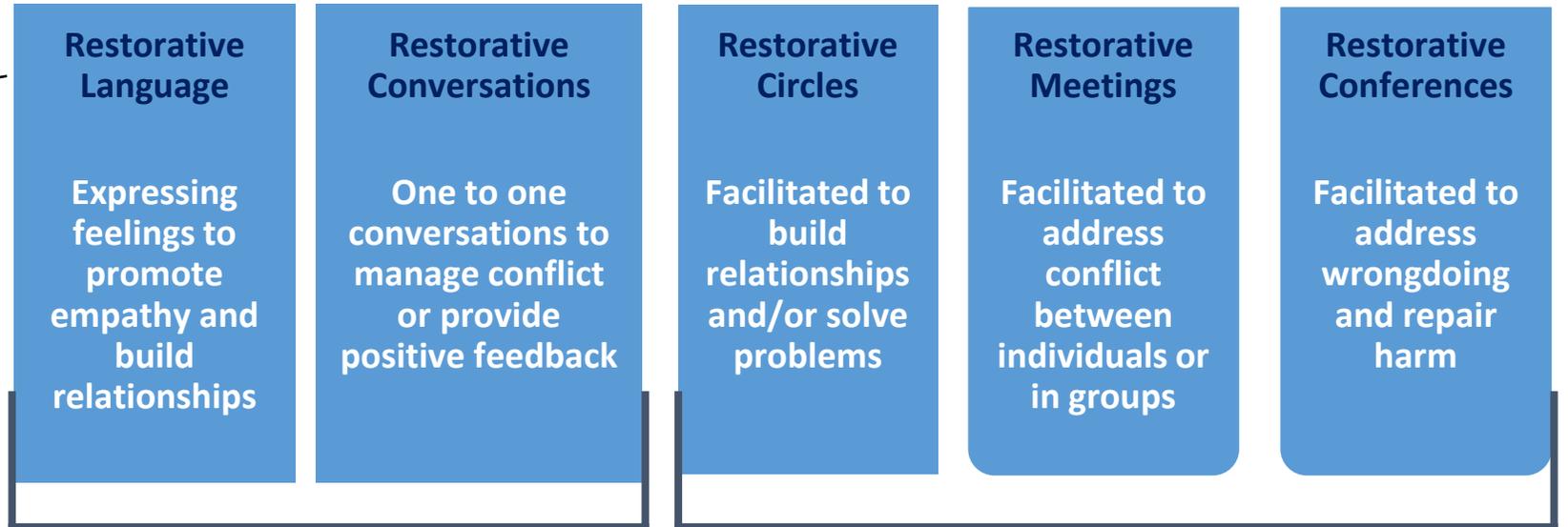
Restorative principles ask all criminal justice professionals and managers to:

- invest time in building relationships
- use non-judgemental, respectful language
- make decisions in ways experienced as fair
- use dialogue to help people participate in identifying and meeting their needs
- repair harm and resolve conflict in a healthy way when it arises



What does this look like in practice?

- Observing without evaluating
- Identifying and expressing feelings
- Connecting feelings with needs
- Making doable requests



Restorative Questions to Address Harm

- * What happened?
- * What were you thinking of at the time?
- * What have you thought about it since?
- * Who has been affected and in what way?
- * How could things have been done differently?
- * What do you think needs to happen next?



European legal framework

60. Use restorative practices ‘where there is a conflict [...] between prisoners and prison officers, between prisoners [or] where there is a conflict between staff.’

61. ‘Restorative principles and approaches may be used **proactively** [...] to **build and maintain relationships**: among staff within the criminal justice system; between police officers and members of the community; among prisoners; between prisoners and their families; or between prisoners and prison officers. This can help to build trust, respect and social capital between or within these groups. [Also] when making managerial decisions and consulting staff, and in other areas of **staff management and organisational decision-making**. This can help to build a restorative culture within these organisations.’



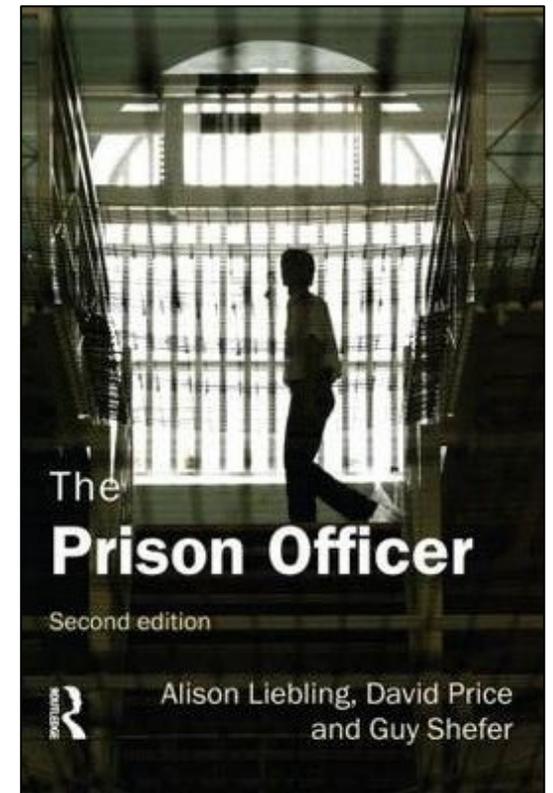
Restorative practices can **build relationships**

“The direct work product that officers produce is not security, control or safety, but **personal interactions between themselves and prisoners**. [...] Relations between staff and prisoners are at the heart of the whole prison system, and control and security flow from getting that relationship right. [...]

Both staff and prisoners are sometimes uncomfortable with the word ‘relationship’. [...] We mean **how staff relate during sustained periods of interaction**, including interaction of a non-rule-enforcing – or rule-resisting – nature. [...]

In a prison, these social practices exist around the ‘tasks’ of the prison day – and ‘relationships’ can develop as a result.”

Liebling, et al. (2011: 83-85).



Restorative practices can prevent and resolve conflict

Traditional strategies are based on security, discipline and control.

Traditional methods of reducing violence rely on:

- Treating violence as rule-breaking
- Punishing those who engage in fights and assaults
- Targeting prevention at those whom staff have identified as aggressive
- Separating perpetrators from victims.

All of these measures are reactive; therefore, we should be sceptical about claims that they provide the basis for effective prevention.

Traditional	Conflict-centred
Fighters/assailants punished	Conflicts analysed & causes identified
Staff identify aggressive prisoners	Staff use dynamic security in peacekeeping role
Perpetrators are separated from victims	Opportunities are provided to resolve differences
Prevention is targeted on identified aggressors	Managing conflicts is a shared responsibility
Intelligence is tightly controlled by security	Prisoners' perspectives are welcomed



Ensuring a safe environment: a conflict centred strategy

May 2018

- Strategies for violence reduction
- Conflicts leading to violence: power contests, punishment, demonstrations of toughness
- Cycles of violence
- Current examples of conflict resolution in prisons
- Preventing violence by managing conflict
- Appendix: Stories of conflict
- Further reading

See [here](#) for the report

Edgar (2018: 2)

Relationships and conflicts in prison services

1) Whose relationships matter for the effective running of your prison service?

What difference would it make if those relationships were more positive?

2) What kinds of conflicts arise in your prison service?

What difference would it make if those conflicts were resolved in a healthy way when they arise?

Prison social climates

Relationships and conflict all contribute to a **prison's social climate**: 'the material, social and emotional conditions of a given unit and the interaction between such factors' (Moos, 1989) – for staff and residents alike.

A positive climate is associated with a **safer, more tolerable environment**:

- less violence and disorder (Friis and Helldin, 1994; Gadon, et al., 2006)
- better staff-prisoner relationships (Bressington, et al., 2011) – see also 'dynamic security'
- lower stress-related sickness calls (Wright, 1993)
- more perceived legitimacy of the administration (Liebling, 2005)
- improved relationships and conflict resolution processes among staff (Pranis, 2006)

And more chances for people to **learn to live in community and fulfil potential**:

- more motivation and engagement with treatment and therapy (Long, et al., 2011)
- better treatment outcomes (Long, et al., 2011)
- lower rates of reoffending (Auty and Liebling, 2019)

Applications in prison settings – Ireland

Since including restorative practices in the last service-level strategy, the Irish Prison Service has:

- Developed training for recruit prison officers for one-to-one use: initial half-day, more input over two years, integration of restorative principles in other RPO training areas (e.g. communications)
- Trained Tutors in restorative practices for use in the College
- Development of new College ‘learning climate’ inclusive of restorative practices
- Training programme for staff in the National Violence Reduction Unit
- Peer mediation programme in Castlerea, now being rolled out to other prisons
- Used focus groups, one-to-one meetings and workshop to develop a service-level strategy
- Delivered and evaluated (ongoing) training with senior managers – and use of circles

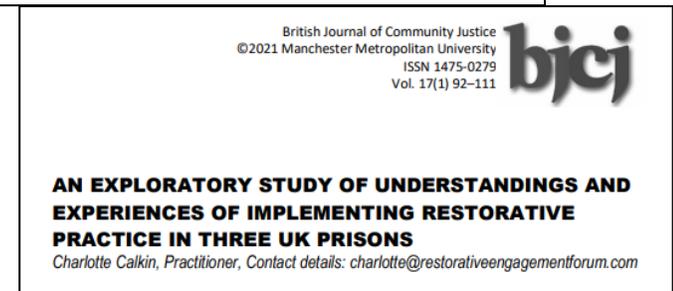
Researching applications in prison settings

Northern Ireland: ‘very encouraging’ evaluation in Maghaberry reduced ‘keep-aparts’ by 27%, and a ‘restorative landing’ in which staff facilitated daily staff-prisoner circles and used restorative practice to respond to incidents (Eagleson, 2022).

EUROPRIS survey (2021) prison services in several countries (e.g. Italy, France, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland and Spain) use restorative practices to respond to breaches of discipline, to resolve conflict and/or to support pre-release.

Study in England (Calkin, 2021: 92) found ‘benefits experienced by both residents and staff when RP is implemented; implemented well, RP delivers and supports a culture of fairness, avoiding or defusing confrontation and contributing to constructive approaches to prison and post-release life and relationships.

However, there is widespread confusion as to the definition of RP and what constitutes RP.’





Restorative practices
and prison cultures

Circles

Tell us one word that describes the positives of the cultures in your country's prison service.

Tell us one word that reflects the challenges with the cultures in your country's prison service.

What similarities and differences are there in what was heard?

Prison cultures

- What are 'prison cultures' and why do you use the plural?
 - Why are they so important in prisons?
- What are the implications for the quality of life and work of staff?
- What do we know about the occupational cultures of prison officers?
- What does the research say about relationships, specifically:
 - Relationships between staff and prisoners?
 - Relationships between staff and prison managers?
- What are the implications for restorative practices?
- Discussion

Restorative practices as tools for learning



Circle

Think about a teacher who helped you learn.

Tell us one word that describes this teacher, we'll write it up.

Take a second to think about this, and we'll go around.

Group cohesion (Rul-Ilan, 2019)



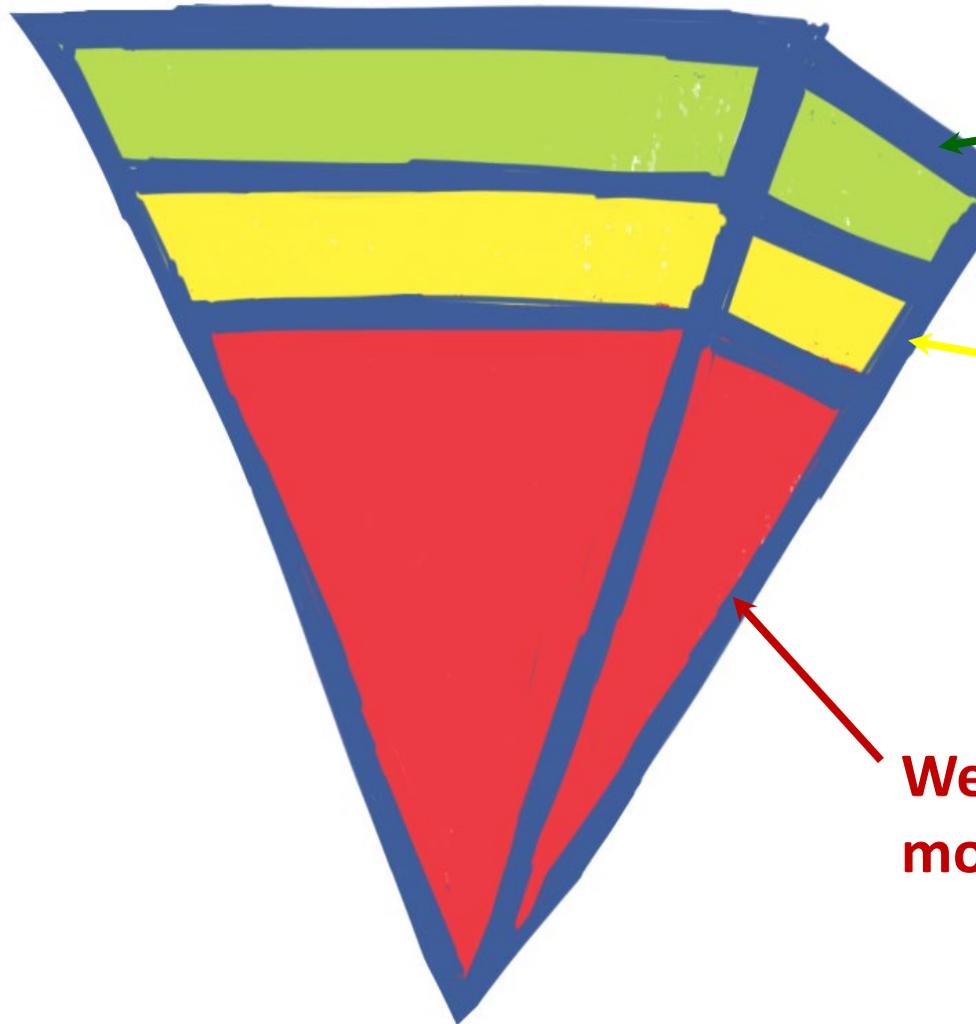
Rul-Ilan argues that task and climate are of equal importance (50-50, task to climate) in classrooms.

What do you think? If you had to put numbers to the importance of task vs climate, what would you say?

Proactive: building a community and positive learning climate



Reactive: waiting for conflict to emerge

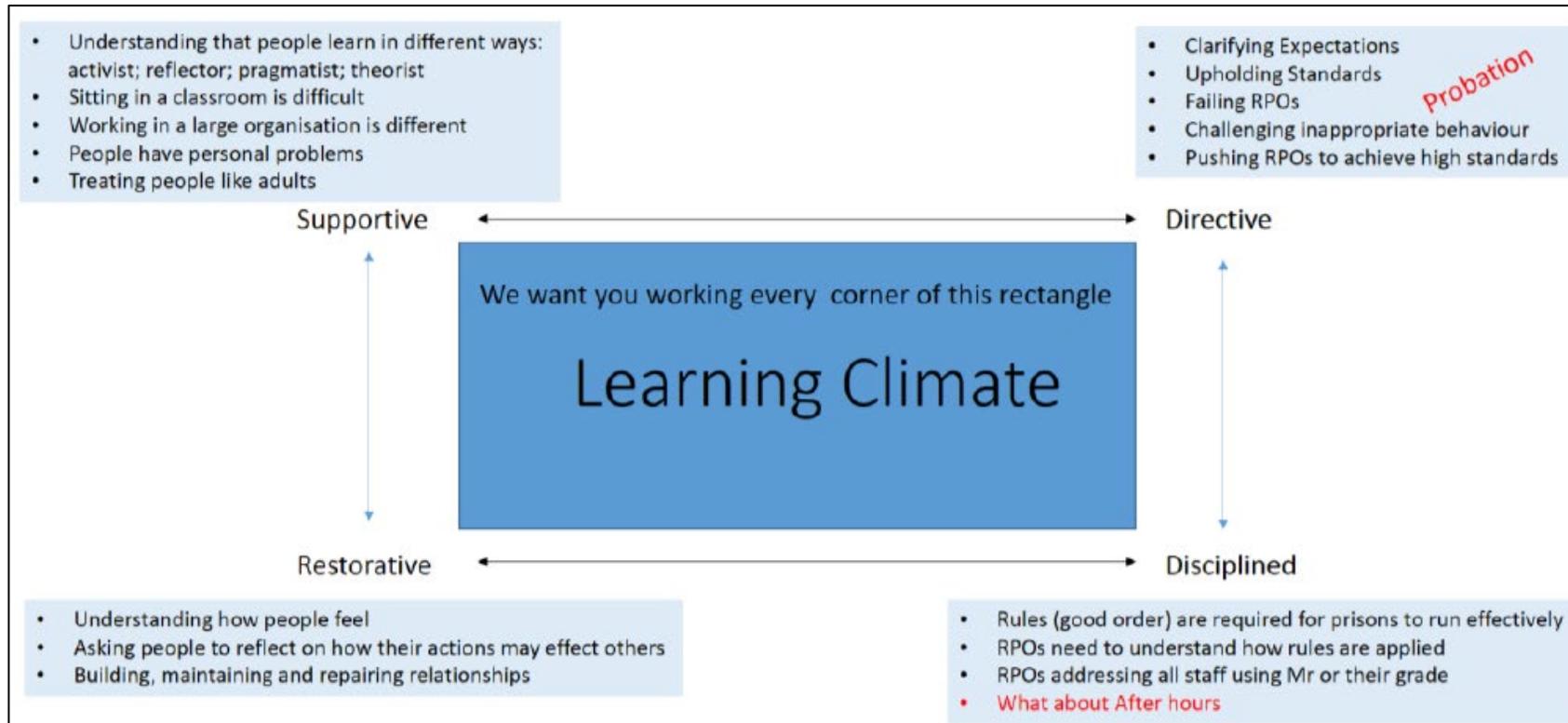


We have no time to build community or class climate.

We do not pay attention to daily conflicts or we solve them *for* students rather than supporting them to take responsibility.

We react when a crisis occurs and default mostly to punitive, exclusionary solutions.

IPS College Learning Climate for Newly Recruited Staff



Tutors 'take a restorative approach through the demonstration of an understanding of how people feel, by building, maintaining and repairing relationships and in helping [recruits] understand the impact of their actions on others.'

Restorative practices in prison officer training

Today, we will consider how to use restorative practices to:

1. Establish norms for training environments – **how should we be when we are together?**
2. Use circles in classrooms – **how do we structure learning conversations?**
3. Repair harm in training environments – **what do we do when something goes wrong?**

1. Establishing norms

Discuss and feed back: Should studying in a prison training academy feel more like studying in a university, or like working in a prison?

Fionnuala and Paraic – How we establish norms in Ireland

Group work: Discussing norms for training

What should be on a list of norms for the training environment?

What difference would it make if trainees developed this themselves?

Debrief

What norms did you discuss?

What did you find easy or challenging about this activity?

How did this activity help you understand the role of restorative practices in prison training environments?

2. Circles

Discuss and feed back: What kinds of questions do you ask groups in prison training college classrooms? How do people usually respond?

Fionnuala and Paraic – How we use circles in training in Ireland

Group work: Designing circle questions

Think about a common discussion you have or a question you ask with groups of trainees (or elsewhere in the prison service).

What are you trying to achieve by that discussion or question?

Design circle questions to structure that discussion.

Debrief

What questions did you discuss?

What did you find easy or challenging about this activity?

How did this activity help you understand the role of restorative practices in prison training environments?

3. Repairing harm

Discuss and feed back: what kinds of harm or conflicts emerge in prison training colleges?

Fionnuala – using RP in prison officer training in Ireland

Example roleplay – what should we do?

Group work: repairing harm in colleges

Think of a scenario where harm or conflict happens in training colleges.

In groups of 3, conduct a roleplay using the restorative questions.

Debrief

What issue did you discuss?

What did you find easy or challenging about this activity?

How did this activity help you understand the role of restorative practices in prison training environments?

Bibliography

- Restorative prisons: introducing a ‘whole prison approach’ (webinar, Sept 2021 – [here](#))
- Case studies from the Dóchas, Wheatfield, Castlerea, the Irish Prison Service College and Alternatives to Violence project – see [here](#)
- Eagleson ([2022](#)) Old keys do not open new doors: Twenty years of restorative justice in Northern Ireland prisons (circulated – or email Ian)
- Calkin & Willmott ([2022](#)) Relationship skills based on restorative practices in prisons
- Auty and Liebling ([2020](#)) Exploring the relationship between Prison Social Climate and Reoffending (€ - email Ian)
- Liebling, et al. ([2011](#)) Staff-prisoner relationships: the heart of prison work (€ - email Ian)