



# THE RESTORATIVE PRACTICES --ADVOCATE--

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A NEWSLETTER for EDUCATORS

## ***Restorative Expression***

"Many, content with their honesty, speak just as they like at the moment. They do not mind what effect it will produce as long as they are sure that what they say is true. The truth that strikes like a hammer on the head of the listener is not desirable. One would be better off without it. By a constant study of life - by special thought given to one's word, by careful watching of the effects of one's speech upon others - one arrives at a state of realization where one can heal hearts." -

**Hazrat Iniyat Khan**

"I suppose it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail." – **Abraham Maslow**

"When love is accompanied with deep intimacy, it raises us to the highest level of human experience." - **Leo Buscaglia**

"It can help us keep our balance to distinguish between the living people who were hurtful and the internalized ones who are now part of our neurobiology. Those who harmed us may never change, but once they become part of us, they seem to partake in our impulse towards healing." — **Bonnie Badenoch**, [The Heart of Trauma: Healing the Embodied Brain in the Context of Relationships](#)

[Badenoch, The Heart of Trauma: Healing the Embodied Brain in the Context of Relationships](#)

## **CALENDAR**

### **FOR YOU!**

(NOTE: For the next two to three years, many Restorative Practices training and in-service events will be occurring in Wichita via the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) and USD 259's Department of Equity, Diversity & Accountability. Be an early adopter of the paradigm that is shaping education for years to come!)

### ***For Your Information\****

(NOTE: This calendar section is set aside for events and meetings designed to help us network with one another collaboratively to increase our restorative Attitudes, Skills & Knowledge – The ASK framework for RP.

\*For ongoing Restorative Practices collaboration in USD 259, Wichita and beyond, your input and feedback to participants is welcome!

## **FOCUS> RP& Our Cultural Environment**

From a TED Talk in June of 2015, **Johann Hari** emphasizes elements of a study done by a Professor of Psychology in Vancouver named **Bruce K. Alexander**. Hari begins by reflecting, "Get a rat and put it in a cage and give it two water bottles. One is just water, and one is water laced with either heroin or cocaine. ... The rat will almost always prefer the drugged water and almost always kill itself very quickly... within a couple of weeks." He then says this is "our theory of addiction." It's about getting hooked.

But in the 1970s, Dr. Alexander decided that rather than putting the rat in an empty cage where it's got nothing to do, he would build "**Rat Park**" for the experiment. Hari goes on to report, "Rat Park is like heaven for rats. Everything your rat about town could want, it's got in Rat Park. It's got lovely food. It's got sex. It's got loads of other rats to be friends with. It's got loads of colored balls. Everything your rat could want. And they've got both the water bottles. They've got the drugged water and the normal water. But here's the fascinating thing. In Rat Park, they don't like the drugged water. They hardly use any of it. None of them ever overdose. None of them ever use in a way that looks like compulsion or addiction."

Alexander's conclusions indicate that addiction is not a moral failing where you are simply a hedonist that parties too hard, nor are you taken over by your brain being hijacked. Instead, addiction is about your "cage." It's really about how we build and adapt to our cultural environment.

Hari adds, "We've created a society where significant numbers of our fellow citizens cannot bear to be present in their lives without being drugged... We've created a hyperconsumerist, hyperindividualist, isolated world that is, for a lot of people, much more like that first cage than it is like the bonded, connected cages that we need." Hari also offers drug use post-Vietnam, and post-hospital stays for the human equivalent of this insight about what does and does not contribute to addiction.

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**"The opposite of addiction is not sobriety. The opposite of addiction is connection."**

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Finally, Hari says "our whole society... is geared towards making us connect with things not people [and] ...in fact, we are trained from a very young age to focus our hopes and our dreams and our ambitions on things we can buy and consume. Drug addiction [really ALL addictions are] a subset of that."

Here is yet another supporting argument for why RP's top focus is building RELATIONSHIP and COMMUNITY! Cultural environment matters.

For more ...

[https://www.ted.com/talks/johann\\_hari\\_everything\\_you\\_think\\_you\\_know\\_about\\_addiction\\_is\\_wrong](https://www.ted.com/talks/johann_hari_everything_you_think_you_know_about_addiction_is_wrong)

2014

Restorative Practices: Approaches at the Intersection of School Discipline and School Mental Health

By Leora Wolf Prusan, EdD, Meagan O'Malley, PhD, and Nancy Hurley, WestEd

This IssueBrief from **Now Is The Time Technical Assistance Center (NITT-TA)** discusses restorative practices and its potential for reducing in and out of school suspensions while increasing student and staff's sense of connectedness and positive school climate. The Restorative Practices paradigm creates inclusive school environments high in expectations, accountability, and compassion, and builds processes that restore and heal relationships within the community.

Educators and mental health providers exhibit growing interest in restorative practices largely because it addresses the root causes of behaviors and the skills needed to choose differently the next time. Restorative practices also increases adult awareness of students' lives and the factors that may be driving the behaviors, not excusing the inappropriate behaviors, but better understanding them. The focus is to support a change in adults' interpretation of students' behavior from **"this student is being oppositional and defiant,"** to **"this student is feeling unsafe and/or emotionally overwhelmed."**

Considering the number of young people facing complex trauma and mental health issues (often untreated), a school wide restorative practices approach shows promise in increasing empathy for and understanding of students who struggle with mental-health related challenges. Given greater adult empathy and understanding, the likelihood is higher that much needed supports and interventions will be provided rather than heavy reliance on ineffective punitive and exclusionary disciplinary practices

For more information: <https://dm0gz550769cd.cloudfront.net/shape/5d/5d75418901f4ed14b77d94193032dc8e.pdf>

For your...

RESTORATIVE  
TOOLBOX

## Why Circles? Purpose, Cautions & References

### Purpose

"Talking circles are based on the sacred tradition of sharing circles. People leading a traditional sharing circle will have a blessing from an Elder to do this and will use special prayers and sacred objects in the ceremony.

"The purpose of the less formal talking circle, used as part of classroom instruction, is to create a safe environment in which students can share their point of view with others. In a Talking Circle, each one is equal and each one belongs. Participants in a Talking Circle learn to listen and respect the views of others. The intention is to open hearts to understand and connect with one another.

### Cautions

- Consider the individual needs of the participants.
- Respect the differing comfort zones of the participants.
- Ensure that the participants feel safe.
- Be mindful of regional protocols in the design of the circle.

### References

This excerpt on talking circles ©Alberta Education; *Our Words, Our Ways: Teaching First Nations, Métis and Inuit Learners*, 2005, p. 163.

<http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/circletalks.html>

(For more information, from your district Google account, click: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1A6zunybjW9tKB6FIBhfprKj7R9ZrpSI> .)

For further info or questions: [rob.simon.rp@usd259.net](mailto:rob.simon.rp@usd259.net), [jpetersen@usd259.net](mailto:jpetersen@usd259.net), [wpolite@usd259.net](mailto:wpolite@usd259.net), [kreynolds1@usd259.net](mailto:kreynolds1@usd259.net)