



## **Definitions of Restorative Justice**

*Restorative Justice (RJ) is a philosophy that is focused on the belief that those affected by harm can work together to repair it and that a collective effort leads to true accountability. Restorative Justice Practices are structured differently from systems we are used to in that they allow for a safe space for people to express their vulnerabilities, strengths, challenges and accomplishments. As a result, the process humanizes all those involved and promotes deeper bonds, a sense of responsibility and healing for all involved – offender, victim, anyone else affected by the crime/offensive action*

### **Restorative Justice – K L MORTON ENTERPRISES**

*Restorative Justice (RJ) is a philosophy, a set of practices and mindset that addresses injustice by thinking about the harms, needs and obligations of all of those involved. It is the belief that those affected by harm can work together to repair the harm and that a collective effort leads to true accountability. Its practices are also a vehicle to create and promote healthy dialog and relationship building.*

### **Culturally Centered Restorative Justice**

*Culturally Centered Restorative Justice is a process and coordinating lifestyle that honors African principles, values and traditions. It is the self conscious “centering” of ubuntu. Those who practice Culturally Centered Restorative Justice are open and available to others, affirming of others, have a proper self-assurance and understands the interconnectedness of all humanity. Culturally Centered Restorative Justice is used to build deep relationships & community, resolve personal and social problems and to promote optimal functioning among all those involved*

### **Cultural Principles that are embedded in Restorative Justice and its practices**

#### **UMOJA-Unity**

To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation, and race.

#### **UJIMA-Collective Work and Responsibility**

To build and maintain our community together and make our brothers' and sisters' problems our problems and solve them together



#### NIA-Purpose

To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

#### IMANI-Faith

To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

#### UBUNTU (uu-boon-too)

My humanity is inextricably bound up in yours

I am because you are

*(A person with Ubuntu is welcoming, hospitable, warm and generous, willing to share. Such people are open and available to others, willing to be vulnerable, affirming of others, do not feel threatened that others are able and good, for they have a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that they belong in a greater whole.)*

*“An anthropologist studying the habits and customs of an African tribe found himself surrounded by children most days. So he decided to play a little game with them. He managed to get candy from the nearest town and put it all in a decorated basket. at the foot of a tree. Then he called the children and suggested they play the game. When the anthropologist said “now”, the children had to run to the tree and the first one to get there could have all the candy to him/herself. So the children all lined up waiting for the signal. When the anthropologist said “now”, all of the children took each other by the hand ran together towards the tree. They all arrived at the same time divided up the candy, sat down and began to happily munch away. The anthropologist went over to them and asked why they had all run together when any one of them could have had the candy all to themselves. The children responded: “Ubuntu. How could any*

#### Pillars of RJ

1. **Encounter (truth):** Create opportunities for those who were harmed, those who caused harm and the affected community members to meet to discuss the wrongdoing and its aftermath.
2. **Accountability (integrity):** Each person is expected to take responsibility to acknowledge and repair the harm they have caused.
3. **Inclusion (hospitality):** Provide opportunities for parties with a stake in a specific wrongdoing to participate in its resolution.
4. **Reintegration (mercy):** Seek to restore everyone to whole, contributing members of the community.



## **RJ in Schools**

### **Definition of RJ in Schools:**

- RJ is a set of practices and values that holistically prevents and repairs harm, builds community and relationships resulting in a positive supportive school climate

### **Goals in schools**

- Create a culture of caring
- Use RJ as an alternative to suspensions, expulsions, arrests,
- Increase social, emotional and academic capacity
- Through communication in the circle, get to (understand) the root causes of behavior of students acting out
- Strengthen sense of belonging
- Break the cycle of retribution and violence
- Empower students and hold them accountable
- Increase safety at the school and in the surrounding community
- Increase social capital (building relationships, community)
- and human capital (ability to communicate, address life challenges)

Restorative Justice and as some call it restorative practices, is not new. The phrase restorative justice was coined in 1977 by Albert Eglash, however the philosophy and accompanying lifestyles and practices are much older. The processes we see today are seen in the traditions of the First Nations people of Canada and the U.S., indigenous people of New Zealand and Australia, and tribes throughout the continent of Africa. In these communities note that this is more than a process to address a specific situation but a way of life.

### **Practices**

Although “peace circle” has become the blanket term to describe the circle process there are different types of circles and other restorative practices.

- Circles (peace, celebration, grief, reentry)
- Peer Juries
- Restorative Conversations
- Conferencing (Victim/Offender, Family Group)
- Community Service



All practices require training, time and planning to insure proper care and safety of the participants

**Implementation**

It is in our experience the best way to implement restorative justice whether in schools or communities is to do it incrementally. Below you will see our recommended process for the successful implementation of Restorative Justice and its practices



To successfully implement Restorative Justice, it should be done incrementally.

