



Restorative Practices Whanganui

Towards a Restorative City: Honoa ki a Rongo ki Whanganui

A Restorative Approach to Temporary Work Team

A restorative approach was implemented to address and start to repair the difficulties experienced by a team of individuals who had come to work together for a fixed term project. Their supervisor was having difficulty in managing the team and the team itself was becoming dysfunctional to the point of affecting some members' health.

Participating in a restorative workplace process is voluntary and in this case, one team member chose not to participate as they had resigned due to the difficulty.

A restorative approach to serious breakdown in relationships, always involves two trained Facilitators who talk confidentially with each person involved and asks questions around the impact on them, what their part in the harm is, and what they can offer to start to repair the harm. Participants are also asked what their outcomes are from taking this approach - usually outcomes are the same for all participants. Facilitators also assess participants' safety in bringing all parties together, identify support people and consider who else may need to be involved.

“This process gave us a better understanding of each other – thank you!”

The supervisor's manager was included to bring an organisational perspective around the team's project and also hear first-hand the issues leading to the dysfunction.

A Restorative Workplace Meeting provides a safe environment for participants to voice their perspective on the difficulties and to really listen to each other's perspective. When participants gain an understanding of each other and acknowledge their own part in the problem, they are more likely to take responsibility in resolving the issues. In this case, the participants were able to discuss and agree the actions they felt were needed to start to repair their team. As the manager was present, they were able to receive immediate organisational support.

As always, Restorative Practice Facilitators follow up with participants 6-8 weeks after bringing them all together. The majority of actions were completed which led to the team working better together for the remainder of the project. The other actions of team building and leadership workshops were not completed due to the short amount of time to project completion.

Restorative practice provided an opportunity for the team to understand each other and work better together. As one team member shared “this will help me be more tolerant of other people I work with in future”.

“As a self-proclaimed ‘introvert’ I was pleasantly surprised to feel comfortable in this open format.”

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