

READING GUIDE

TEACHING PEACE: A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FRAMEWORK FOR STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS



BY BEVERLY B. TITLE, PH.D.

Restorative justice has become a movement that is being applied in criminal justice and school systems around the world with truly excellent results. Colorado is on the forefront of this movement with programs such as the one chronicled in Conflict Resolution Month's 2012 book selection. The intention of this Reading Guide is to stimulate thinking and personal practice at all levels — personal, family, work, community.

Use the following questions and activity suggestions to enhance your reading and, perhaps, to expand your own approach to conflict resolution. To explore the book in greater depth, activity-based study guides may be downloaded “at no cost” under “Products” at www.respath.com. There are separate guides for individuals, communities, families, educators and school communities, as well as human service professionals.

The 5 R's

This book describes five basic principles of the restorative approach, or the 5 R's: **RELATIONSHIP, RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, REPAIR AND REINTEGRATION**. These principles may be used to prevent, resolve and transform conflict.

For Individuals

- Consider which of the R's are easy and which ones are challenging for you to integrate fully into your daily life.
- Look at how each one shows up or doesn't show up in your life.
- Identify at least one thing you'd like to do to more fully integrate an R into your life. Identify an action step to help you achieve it, and make a commitment to an action.

For Families

A multicultural teaching tale from Thailand called “Not Our Problem” appears on page 55. Ask everyone to get comfortable and then read the story aloud. Afterwards ask the following questions, being sure that each person gets a chance to respond without interruption.

- How does the meaning of this story apply to our family?
- How do our actions affect each other? Can you give examples from our family life?
- How is that effective or not effective?

For Schools

Working alone or in teams, use the “Apology Guidelines” on page 186-187 to create a meaningful apology. You may use a historical event or fictional characters as the basis for your apology. Each team reads their apology letter to the group for their evaluation on how well it did or did not meet the guidelines. Please be light-hearted and have fun with this one, too.

For Groups & Organizations

Working in pairs, complete the “Asset Survey” found on pages 188 – 189. (If you're doing this with adults, ask them to “reframe” questions 7 & 8 to fit them.) Use the 1 – 4 coding system to ascertain each person's areas of strength and challenge. Debrief this activity by coming back together to share personal insights. Participants should use caution in not sharing their partner's information without permission.

For Human Service Professionals

Working alone or in pairs, use the “tips” section at the end of each R chapter to explore how to use the language of each R. It is imperative that you speak this aloud. You must find the words which feel natural to you and convey the meaning. They must be words that can easily flow out of your mouth. This is best practiced in pairs or small groups, but even if doing this alone, be sure to speak out loud. Once you are comfortable using restorative language, it is time to begin tutoring your clients in this valuable life skill!

The Guiding Question for Teaching Peace is:

How can the wisdom of the 5 R's be used to heal all parties involved in crime or conflict?