

RESTORATIVE MEDIATION TECHNIQUE FOR UNDERLYING CONFLICT

When unresolved conflict is at the root of a relationship issue, it is beneficial to ask additional questions that go beyond the universal three. This is vital to reducing the possibility of recidivism/reoffending that could keep the conflict fired up for years. Become a detective, but probe with sensitivity to uncover personal issues or festering wounds for students in conflict. Although these questions lean toward mediation, please keep in mind that RJ CONFERENCING IS NOT MEDIATION. Mediation requires much more training and mentoring. In RJ when ongoing unresolved conflict is at the root, consider questions like these:

1. Is there something else going on between you two that you'd like to talk about?
2. How long have you and _____ been experiencing conflict or other problems in your relationship? This helps to get what is behind the conflict. Long standing issues are more difficult to solve and may need more time than most short-lived conflicts.
3. Is there something underneath all this that triggers one or both of you to be in conflict?
4. Does any of this interfere with your schoolwork? How do you feel about coming to school each morning?
5. [If the student prefers not to talk in front of the group] Do you have someone at the school that you trust whom you could confide in?
6. What do you think you need?
7. How are you feeling right now? [Use the "I feel I need" word lists]
8. What is something that would make your life better right away?
9. What do you think would be the best possible outcome for all this?
10. The school has partnered with community agencies and resources for students dealing with family or personal or medical issues that might be getting in the way of focusing on school. The majority of these resources are free. Is that something you'd like to explore and see if there's some help for what you're going through?

Tell me more about that...

I want to be sure I understand what you said...(*paraphrase back to them*)

How does that make you feel?

Have you spoken to your parents about this? What do they say?

FACILITATORS USE EMPATHY ~ SEEK TO UNDERSTAND ~ USE A NON-THREATENING TONE OF VOICE AND GOOD EYE CONTACT

Remember that this could be the most important conversation this student will ever have and it may be remembered throughout his/her life.