

ABBREVIATED SCRIPT FOR RESTORATIVE JUSTICE CONFERENCE

Note: This script is used for the formal face-to-face “RJ Conference” dialog after pre-conferences with each separate party have taken place. An experienced RJ facilitator has determined in the preconference that the person who caused harm has taken responsibility for actions, shown remorse and empathy for those harmed and has volunteered to listen to how his/her/their behaviors have affected others and wishes to repair that harm. Those who have been harmed by these actions are also comfortable and willing to meet face to face. If not, a “victim advocate” may represent those harmed. If all these requirements are not fulfilled in the pre-conference, the formal face-to-face meeting does not take place.

SCRIPT

(Speaking parts are highlighted for rotation of each adult or student leader in the circle.)

WELCOME

Welcome to our restorative justice conference. My name is _____ and I will be facilitating this circle. I want to thank each of you for taking the time to be here so we can help our students to take responsibility for their actions and find a way to repair the harm. We have only a few guidelines. Everyone must speak openly and honestly. Please do not interrupt the person speaking, and please treat each person with respect. Everyone will have a chance to say what they need to and will be able to ask questions. *[Have everyone introduce themselves.]*

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

This is a sacred circle. All members of our circle must agree to keep what is said here confidential. We do not want anyone’s personal information to be spread around the school or outside of the school where it can harm the people who are here. Can everyone be trusted to keep what is said here confidential? I’m going to pass around a Confidentiality Agreement for everyone to sign.

THE FORMAL CONFERENCE

We will have three rounds of questions and discussion and everyone will have the opportunity to speak and ask other questions. *[You may use a talking piece to ensure everyone has a chance to speak without interruption.]*

The first question is: What happened? Who would like to begin? *[Give preference to the person who was harmed, then the offending student, then others who may have been present during the incident. Be sure that everyone is clear on WHAT HARM HAS BEEN DONE, and thus, WHAT HARM NEEDS TO BE REPAIRED.]* Are we all clear on what harm was done? What can each of you take responsibility for that caused or contributed to the harm? What are you most proud of having done that made things better? If you had it to do over, what would you do differently?

Does anyone have any other questions specifically about what happened? *[People may need clarification, for example, on time of day, who else was around when the incident happened, whether alcohol was involved, or other specifics about the incident itself.]*

Now let’s move to our second round of questions: Who did this incident affect and how? 2. Who has been the most harmed?

And now let’s move to our final round of questions: What can be done to repair the harm and make things better in the future? *[Give preference to those who have been harmed to see what would make a difference for them. Co-facilitator should take notes during this brainstorm session. When all ideas are given, decide which consequences should be included in the Harm Repair Agreement, relevant to the incident, do-able by the offending student(s), and measurable, usually 30-60 days. Write out the Agreement and have everyone sign it. Find out who will support the offending student(s) to complete his/her/their consequences. The facilitator will follow up 2 weeks before the agreement should be completed and will write up a follow-up report back to the main referral office when complete.]*

THANK YOU AND EVALUATION

Thank you all for coming. I know this was not an easy thing to accomplish and some of you had to take time off from work or school to be here at our Restorative Justice Conference. We appreciate your participation. I know that we all want to make our school safer so our students and staff can thrive and work together to make our students successful in life. Thank you so much again for helping us to do that.