

ABSTRACT

Community Peacemaking Using Restorative Justice Principles: “When Neighbors Are Not Being Neighborly.”

This presentation is about creating a sustainable peace in communities which are experiencing the lack of it from heightened criminal activity, racial or cultural prejudice, or merely from its neighbors not being neighborly. It exhibits a new application model for traditional Restorative Justice which has been proven to be a successful tool for municipalities to interrupt disruptive activity, de escalate unacceptable social behavior, resolve aggravated differences, and preempt potential criminal acts; in other words, “When Neighbors Are Not Being Neighborly.”

“Community dissonance” often masks the values of respect, open-mindedness, inclusion, effective communication, and right-relations. The model uses Restorative Justice principles to create Community Peacemaking Conferencing. Here, as in traditional Restorative Justice conferencing, dissonant parties can find the root cause of their problem and then together develop a path to harmony and peace between themselves. Achievable goals are reduced calls for police service, fewer distractions for municipal authorities and the cost savings realized from both. Proven results are reduced criminal behavior, arrests and court cases, along with reduced fear of crime and a restored sense of community. Community Peacemaking Conferencing is a tool for working towards a sustainable peace in communities and their neighborhoods. This is a proven process which has significant potential, and one which should and can be implemented for creating peace and harmony.

Attendees of this presentation will be introduced to Restorative Justice philosophy, origins, principles and techniques. They will learn how Restorative Justice differs from Retributive Justice, and how RJ methods can bring about better outcomes for all parties concerned in an altercation or offense. Attendees will learn how to apply RJ techniques into community settings away from the criminal justice system through Community Peacemaking Conferencing which redirect neighbors who are not being neighborly.

This presentation includes actual municipal initiatives where this model has been implemented . It also includes graphics which assist in its explanation.

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