

Trauma-Informed Youth Justice
A New Framework toward a Kinder Future

By Judah Oudshoorn

Instructor's Manual
Compiled by Lee Slinger

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Sample
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Chapter 1

A Framework for Trauma-Informed Youth Justice

Suggested in-class activities:

1. In small groups (or as a class), imagine a basic scenario in which a crime has been committed. Using Howard Zehr's set of questions from this chapter, analyze the crime and assign an imagined resolution for each type of justice. As a class, discuss the differences in possible outcomes.
2. With a large sheet of paper (or on the board), draw a diagram which connects a youth that has committed a crime with all the individuals, organizations, and institutions that might be involved. Draw connections between the individuals and organizations, indicating how various groups are related to the offender, the victim, and the broader community.
3. As a class, discuss Figure 1.1 ("Trauma-Informed Youth Justice as a Living Organism"). What are the differences between the various parts of the tree (practices, theories, worldview, values)? Why are the "values" represented as the roots? In practice, how would this structure inform how you address youth justice?
4. Assign small groups one of the core values of trauma-informed youth justice (critical thinking, human dignity, participation, peace, a holistic approach to addressing crime, and social change). Have them define the value, give an example, explain its significance to youth justice, and formulate a discussion question for the class on that value. Have each group present their findings. Encourage students to share notes.

Suggested assignments:

1. Write a 500- to 600-word reflection on what you think "justice" means, specifically in the context of youth criminal offenders. In your reflection, consider your personal experiences that have influenced how you understand "justice," as well as what other sources of information or knowledge have shaped what you believe is just.
2. Using newspaper, magazine, or scholarly articles, find an example of restorative justice in practice. The example should ideally be Canadian, but you can draw from other countries. Write a three- to four-page paper that presents the case and explains, using information in this chapter, how it is representative of restorative justice.

Additional resources:

Web Resource

- Correctional Services Canada (2015). Restorative Justice Week 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/restorative-justice/003005-2000-eng.shtml>
Each year in November, there is a Restorative Justice Week held in Canada and throughout the world. Correctional Services Canada provides several resources to educate about restorative justice and to help bring ideas and discussion about restorative justice to communities across the country.

Newspaper Article

- Catherine Porter (2012). How a Toronto high school fights bullying without bullying—using restorative talking, not discipline and suspensions. *The Toronto Star*. Retrieved from: http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2012/04/23/porter_how_a_toronto_high_school_fights_bullying_without_bullying_using_restorative_talking_not_discipline_and_suspensions.html
A newspaper article on the use of restorative justice philosophy and techniques on the violence problem in one Toronto-area high school. The article describes the “restorative conference” used by the school and the positive results the philosophy has had on not only school violence, but also on communication amongst students and between students, teachers, and staff.

Multiple Choice Questions:

(p. 1) 1. Which groups of people does the net of criminal justice tend to catch more often than anyone else?

- a. Indigenous youth and the children of those already incarcerated.
- b. The children of those already incarcerated and the mentally challenged.
- c. The drug-addicted and the poor.
- D. The poor, mentally challenged, and Indigenous youth.**

(p. 1) 2. What is one of the many reasons behind the failure of the current youth justice system?

- A. Broader social problems like the colonization of Indigenous peoples and patriarchal male violence.**
- b. Failure to provide adequate legal representation for defendants who come from low-income backgrounds.
- c. Justice system budget cut-backs mean that the accused face long waits for trial and sentencing.
- d. Short sentences lead to youth being released before rehabilitation can occur.

(p. 1–2) 3. Which of the following is NOT a predominant and powerful myth that influences the current state of youth justice in Canada?

- a. A tough-on-crime approach is the best way to meet the needs of victims.
- b. Punishment resolves crime.
- C. The costs of rehabilitation outweigh the benefits.**
- d. Victims are entirely vengeful.

(p. 2) 4. How does the punitive culture of the youth justice system do a disservice to youth?

- a. Punishment alone is not enough to instill within the youth a sense of the harm they have caused.
- B. Punishment gets in the way of creating resilient, inclusive, and hopeful communities.**
- c. The punishment given rarely reflects the nature of the crime.
- d. Punishment, in the form of isolation, stunts the emotional development of youth.

(p. 5–11) 5. Which of the following are NOT core values of trauma-informed youth justice?

- a. Critical thinking and social change.
- B. Education and rehabilitation.**
- c. Human dignity and a holistic approach to addressing crime.
- d. Participation and peace.

(p. 3) 6. Trauma is distinguished from stress by:

- a. Creating difficult feelings for its victims.
- b. Its lack of ordinariness.
- C. Its limiting nature.**
- d. The nature of the incident that causes it.

(p. 3) 7. A trauma-informed approach to youth justice prioritizes:

- a. Effective punishment and rehabilitation.
- B. Meaningful accountability and connection.**
- c. PTSD recovery and individual health.
- d. The unique needs of younger people and community service.

(p. 4) 8. What is the starting point, or "roots," of an approach to trauma-informed justice?

- a. Practices.

- b. Theories.
- C. Values.**
- d. Worldview.

(p. 5) 9. Critical thinking, as it pertains to trauma-informed youth justice, emphasizes what aspect of knowledge in addition to basic logic?

- a. Knowledge is discipline and comes from dedicated study of others who have come before.
- b. Knowledge is power and those who seek it are empowered to create positive change.
- C. Knowledge is relational and comes from being accountable to others in a web of relationship.**
- d. Knowledge is truth and can be found in the study of the traditions of Indigenous peoples and other religious teachings.

(p. 5–6) 10. What is the basic principle of human dignity?

- a. That everyone deserves to be treated in the same manner as they have treated others.
- B. That everyone, even those who have caused great harm, deserves to be treated as we would want to be treated ourselves.**
- c. That everyone, except those who have caused great harm, deserves to be treated as we would want to be treated ourselves.
- d. That those who are treated with respect are more likely to treat others with respect in return.

(p. 6–9) 11. Physical and sexual abuse, neglect, family violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, poverty, bullying, homophobia, learning disabilities, school failure, and residency in foster care settings and institutional care facilities are all potential root causes of:

- a. Anger issues.
- b. Dependency on social programs.
- C. Homelessness.**
- d. Suicide attempts.

(p. 6–9) 12. The democratization of the production of knowledge based on the lived experiences of marginal groups is known as what?

- a. Holistic Practice.
- b. Jurisprudence.
- C. Participation.**
- d. Restorative Justice.

(p. 7) 13. According to Lyon-Callo, researchers should start by doing what in order to eradicate social inequalities?

A. Reducing hierarchical conditions and power dimensions in the research process.

- b. Researching economic models that involve a more equal distribution of wealth.
- c. Studying the effects of a person's environment upon their development process.
- d. Tracking patterns of intergenerational incarceration within families.

(p. 8) 14. According to Kirby and McKenna, who do the academics who study homelessness typically think are most knowledgeable about the issues surrounding homelessness?

A. The academics who study homelessness.

- b. The front-line social and health care workers.
- c. The research assistants who gather the data.
- d. Those who are experiencing, or have experienced, homelessness.

(p. 9) 15. Peace, as a value of trauma-informed justice, is best expressed as:

- a. A reduction in criminal activities.
- b. The absence of conflict.
- C. Communities that are working to end violence in all its forms.**
- d. Small, round, green vegetables.

(p. 9) 16. Which of the following is NOT a United Nations objective for peacebuilding?

- a. Address drivers and root causes of conflict and violence.
- B. Build institutions that have the capability to rehabilitate even the most violent offenders.**
- c. Build trust and legitimacy of governments.
- d. Enhance social cohesion and build trust among social groups.

(p. 10) 17. According to criminologist Hal Pepinsky, what is the concern of peacemaking criminologists?

- a. Inconsistent sentencing of violent offenders.
- b. The ease of access to firearms.
- c. The extent of unreported violent incidents.
- D. Unequal power and how the use of power can be violent.**

(p. 10) 18. What, fundamentally, is peacebuilding about?

- A. Building relationships, or bridges, across divided groups of people.**
- b. Establishing housing and jobs for the at-risk populations of our society.
- c. Instilling fear of consequences within those who would be violent.
- d. Separating those who would be violent from those whom they would seek to harm.

(p. 11) 19. What would making violence a public health issue allow for?

- A. A more holistic understanding of its causes and a greater focus on its prevention.**
- b. Better financial support where public health is government funded.
- c. Easier education of the public and quicker access to needed resources.
- d. More effective identification and treatment of its victims as well as its perpetrators.

(p. 12) 20. According to Abe Oudshoorn, of all the social determinants of health, which one is the most predictive of well-being?

- a. Biology and genetic endowment.
- B. Income and social status.**
- c. Personal health practices and coping skills.
- d. Physical and social environments.

(p. 13) 21. According to Abe Oudshoorn, due to different opportunities around the social determinants of health that people encounter by lottery of birth, what must be done in order to create more equal health outcomes within our society?

- a. Any move toward privatization of health care must be prevented.
- b. People entering the health care system must be better connected to social programs upon release.
- c. Proactive, street-level intervention must be established for those experiencing homelessness.
- D. Public resources must be distributed unequally.**

(p. 13) 22. Paulo Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, says that healthy dialogue involves:

- A. Love and hope.**
- b. Not giving up.
- c. Remaining static for a period of time.
- d. The ability to listen well.

(p. 14) 23. How has their view of justice affected the traditional approach of Indigenous communities to dealing with justice matters in more restorative ways?

- a. Justice has been about creating punishments that relate to the crimes.

B. Justice has been about restoring what has been disrupted.

- c. There has been a priority on the spiritual as it relates to justice.
- d. There has been an avoidance of capital punishment.

(p. 15) 24. According to Crown Attorney Rupert Ross, the Indigenous communities have traditionally viewed wrongdoing as:

- a. A form of decay that can spread throughout the community if not eradicated.

B. A misbehaviour which requires teaching or an illness which requires healing.

- c. A problem of the youth that fades with age and wisdom.
- d. A spiritual matter that requires the involvement of the Elders.

(p. 15) 25. One of the pioneers of the field of restorative justice, who has been influenced by his Mennonite faith tradition, by his experiences during the civil rights era in the U.S., and by Indigenous communities, is:

- a. Abe Oudshoorn.

B. Howard Zehr.

- c. Jesus Christ.
- d. Joshua Jones.

(p. 15) 26. When a crime has been committed, what is the first question asked by our traditional criminal justice system?

- a. What are the root causes?

B. What law has been broken?

- c. Who did it?
- d. Who has been hurt?

(p. 15) 27. What is the starting place of a restorative justice approach to crime?

- a. What are the root causes?
- b. What law has been broken?
- c. Who did it?

D. Who has been hurt?

(p. 15) 28. What question is NOT addressed by a restorative justice approach?

- a. What are the needs of the victim?
- b. What is the best process for making things are right as possible?
- C. What punishment fits the crime?**
- d. Who needs to be involved in a justice process?

(p. 16) 29. Who is the primary victim within our traditional justice system?

- a. The defendant.
- b. The person who has been hurt by the crime.
- C. The state.**
- d. The witnesses.

(p. 16) 30. What is the primary focus of restorative justice?

- a. Analyzing root causes, such as trauma.
- b. Engaging the community in designing justice processes.
- c. Holding offenders meaningfully accountable.
- D. Meeting the needs of victims.**

(p. 16) 31. Within a restorative justice framework, how are offenders held meaningfully accountable?

- a. By being creative with the punishment.
- B. By helping offenders to understand the harms they have caused.**
- c. By prioritizing community service with sentencing.
- d. Through mediated communication with the victim(s).

(p. 17) 32. How does our criminal justice system often exacerbate trauma that has been experienced by offenders?

- A. By isolating the offenders, causing disruption to attachments.**
- b. By making the offenders relive negative experiences in the court setting.
- c. By placing them within the violent society of the prison setting.
- d. By the labels that are applied to them, such as "offender" and "criminal."

(p. 17) 33. According to criminologist Elizabeth M. Elliott, what is the primary deterrent for criminal or harmful activity?

- a. Laws.
- b. Punishments.
- C. Relationships.**
- d. Sanctions.

(p. 18) 34. What obligation does a restorative justice framework place upon Canada as a nation?

- a. To ask more questions of the victims of crime.
- B. To decolonize.**
- c. To repair its broken justice system.
- d. To welcome more diversity.