

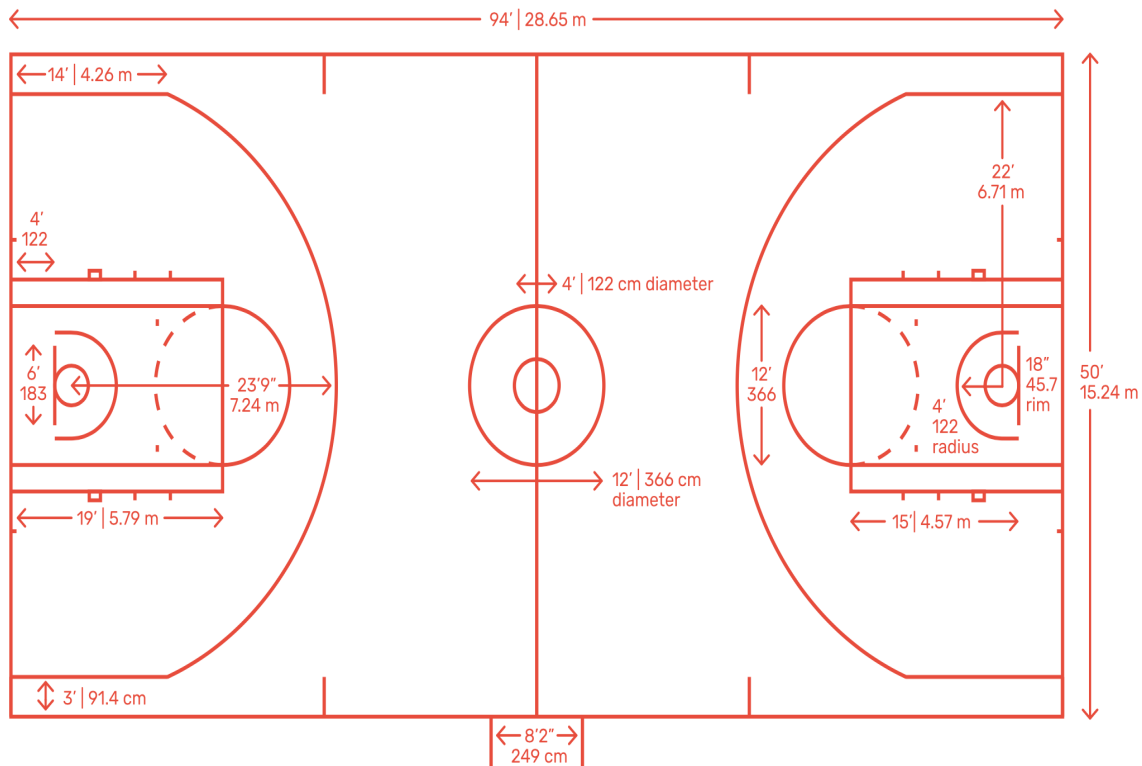
What Does it Mean to PRACTICE Restoratively in the Day-to-Day?

Restorative Practices is more about *practicing* in the day-to-day *when there are no conflicts, problems, rules broken, etc.*, than it is when there are matters to fix, repair, or restore. This can be difficult to understand; A useful way to think about this is to use a game metaphor.

In any game, such as baseball, volleyball, football, basketball or even board games, there are rules that must be followed so that everyone is playing by the same rules. These rules *define* the game played. They are called, **Summary Rules**. Summary rules must be followed or the game stops, until the rules are again followed. In a game where there are referees, such as basketball, when the summary rules are broken, the whistle is blown and the game stops until the summary rules are again followed.

Some, but not all **Summary Rules** when playing basketball:

1) Specific court dimensions



- 2) Five players on each team when the game is being played
- 3) Depending upon where/when there is a score, 1, 2 or 3 points are awarded
- 4) No double dribbling: Ball must be moved while single dribbling
- 5) No fouling
- 6) Amount of time for each quarter/half
- 7) Many others....

There is another category of rules. These are called, **Strategic Rules**, and they allow a player or a team to play the game well. Young children learning how to play a game have difficulty even following summary rules, much less mastering any strategic rules that allow them to play the game well. Professional players have mastered the summary rules of any game and focus on how to play the game well; they focus on strategic rules.

Some, but not all **Strategic Rules** when playing basketball:

- 1) Passing the ball among players to move the ball downcourt for scoring position
- 2) Man-to-Man Defense or Zone Defense
- 3) When/how to stop the clock or call a “time out”
- 4) When/Who should start in the game
- 5) When/Who to trade with a player on the bench
- 6) How to maximize the number of 3-point scores
- 7) Many others....

Practicing Restoratively is analogous to playing a game such as basketball. The Social Practices window identifies four different ways to *practice*, depending upon the amount of Support and Expectations (low to high). Practicing restoratively has a specific set of summary rules. The Restorative Practices “Court” (Field of Play) is represented below as the one quadrant in the Social Practices Window that represents having High Expectations and High Support. The remaining three quadrants (Punitive, Permissive and Neglectful) cannot be where one practices.



The summary rules of practicing restoratively are as follows:

- 1) Build it and repair it!
- 2) High expectations and high support
- 3) Working "WITH" others
 - a. Use of Affective Statements, Restorative Questions, and Circles
 - b. Holding individuals accountable for their actions by reparation/restoration and education
 - c. NEVER any "pre-determined" authority-driven "punishing" (exclusionary) consequences
- 4) NEVER ask, "WHY did you do that?"
- 5) NEVER ask, "What better CHOICE could you have made?"
- 6) NEVER ask for or force an apology to be made!
- 7) Seeking outside assistance cannot "FIX/REPAIR" the situation unless the collective affected parties are directly involved
- 8) Treating behavioral transgressions as educational opportunities
 - a. Behavioral improvement is no different than academic improvement; both need to be taught, practices and support given until the skills are mastered

There are also strategic rules that allow a restorative practitioner to be 'authentic.' *Working restoratively is NOT a "cookie cutter" approach!* This work enables each and every adult to be *strategic* in their own practice and adapt the "rules of the game" (summary rules) to their individual uniqueness & job. The strategies to foster these measures are NOT hidden away in some "secret" vault. They rest in the hearts and minds of the faculty/staff /parents/guardians in your schools. Below are the strategic rules of practicing restoratively:

- 1) Ritualizing environments
- 2) How/when/what kind circles are used
- 3) How/when to hold restorative conversations
- 4) Use/implementation of Affective Statements and Restorative Questions
- 5) Building Connectedness/Community/Relationships
- 6) How to conduct academic instruction though the lens of relationship/community building
- 7) Choice of use of Talking Pieces, or not

Working restoratively is not just for school use. One should practice restoratively everywhere; in the home, community and anywhere else one exists. This is the Landscape/Environment in which everything we do happens! It is the playing field ("Court"), and processes/strategies that NEVER changes...focusing on these "rules of the game" (summary rules) and processes/strategies (strategic rules) removes biases and fosters inclusion instead of leaving decisions and choices entirely up to individual decision-making and student/family handbooks that are silent on context and unique situations. Not only do the practices work, but they align with the biology and psychology of being human... Restorative Practices is here to stay!! It is not just another fad!!