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A GOOD RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICE IN AN ITALIAN SCHOOL

ABSTRACT

School is the formal context deputed to the education and learning of children, but it is also the first and most important place for socialisation with non-chosen peers and non-neighbouring adults. From these premises one can only conclude that pupils and students who display behaviour that transgresses the rules of civil and democratic coexistence manifest an educational need. Just as error is an opportunity for learning, a school incapable of inclusion would manifest a lack of planning and an inability to value the uniqueness of each one. In the direction of promoting transformative educational actions from a constructive point of view, of the errors committed, an Italian school, has developed a project aimed at transforming the transgression of a school rule into an opportunity for individual and systemic-relational growth. The contribution highlights briefly, the salient aspects of the project and the results in terms of learning some competences for life through the approach of committed pedagogy oriented towards inclusion.

KEYWORDS: *Restorative justice, Education, Training, Skills, Behavioural transformation, Inclusion*

1. INTRODUCTION

Daily national and international news reports show, with much greater frequency, episodes of violence at school, aggressive and antisocial behaviour, bullying, attitudes that systematically violate school rules (tardiness, vandalism, unjustified absences), by pupils of all ages, often caused by toxic relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers or by excessive aggression and marginality (De Laet et al. 2015; Rudasill et al., 2010). The world of education, with respect to this problem, reacts by implementing, almost invariably, zero-tolerance policies that by using punitive and exclusionary practices aim to control and manage pupils' behaviour (Lodi et al., 2021, p.1). These policies exacerbate disciplinary problems and exacerbate racial, gender and socioeconomic status disparities (Gwathney, 2021; Ingraham et al., 2016), emphasising the need for alternative approaches to school discipline management, as well as approaches that aim to promote wellbeing throughout the school community. Thus, where education was supposed to explode as a liberating force, it turns out, instead, to be a mechanism with high potential for domination and power (Hooks, 2020a, pp. 33-34). Many schools, reflecting on the failure of such punitive practices from the point of view of educational outcomes, are increasingly trying to use restorative practices to implement an educational project that, through a multi-level approach, can produce a significant impact in terms of sustainability in the relationships within a complex community such as the school and the whole environment (McCold, 2008) and a more qualitative presence of each individual subject. The aim is to transform conflicts, misbehaviour that have occurred within a school context into opportunities for transversal growth through the recovery and development of strong bonds, a unique and unrepeatable learning experience that each subject has the opportunity to have (Hooks, 2020a), a sense of community, built on values such as trust, responsibility, and the well-being of the subjects involved. Removing weak individuals who repeatedly commit school offences from school would be tantamount to admitting the school's total lack of planning and the failure of the educational alliance with families and the local area, which, together, are responsible for educating and supporting the educational success of each pupil and student amidst difficulties that are

increasingly complex to manage. One must therefore ask oneself whether a system of sanctions aimed at removing children from school, forcing them to stay at home where, due to particular family situations, it is difficult for them to improve their behaviour and education, is legitimate. In the same way, it is legitimate to ask oneself whether it is sufficient to remove children from school to make amends for bad behaviour, or whether, on the other hand, the school, as an educating community, should re-establish a positive relationship between the one who caused an injury or offence and the one who received it. Implementing a restorative justice educational project, in a system still based on punitive reintegration logics can represent the real educational transgression (Hooks, 2020a) able to produce a transformation of behaviour, to foster the understanding of certain educational values and the development of life skills capable of promoting effective and sustainable relationships within the school community. The restorative justice paradigm, in fact, does not simply aim to help those who have received an offence but is concerned with elaborating a path of reintegration for those who have committed wrongdoing (Wright, 2002), therefore it pursues educational goals. This paradigm, combining the fundamental elements of ecological systems theory, which argues that individual behaviour is determined by multiple causes and is sensitive to multiple influences from the microsystems in which each subject moves and operates (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) and the psychology of affect (Higgins, 1987) proposes a model in which restorative practices help to develop strong bonds and offer the opportunity for the student to value his/her presence, express his/her emotions, to live the school experience with pure joy (hooks, 2020a), to take public responsibility for his/her behaviour and to reintegrate into the school community (Acosta et al., 2019). An error-repair project, therefore, if it is to be educational, must promote an opportunity for individual and systemic growth, which aims to enhance the social-relational dimension “with the broader goal of building safe school communities that promote well-being” (Lodi et al., 2021, p. 1). On the basis of these concepts, the following pages will describe the salient features of a project in which restorative practices provided the possibility for different forms of marginality to be transformed into radical creative possibilities and space par excellence (Hooks, 2020a).

2. EDUCATIONAL RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR A MORE SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL

The case that we want to highlight through this contribution describes an educational project started in 2019, which the headmaster of the Istituto comprensivo Lentini-Einstein in Mottola, in the province of Taranto, strongly wanted to implement in his school, as an alternative proposal to the classic punishment, due to problematic behaviour repeatedly manifested by the students. For some time there had been episodes in which pupils had been involved in acts of bullying, offensive phrases even towards teachers, defacement of the school gardens, homophobic and xenophobic writing on the walls inside and outside the school. But what had strongly motivated the school's management to adopt a different approach from that of suspension with stay-at-home were the phrases that the punished pupils punctually expressed immediately after the announcement of the sanction for the weekend: 'Thank you, headmaster, you really needed it!' The school, therefore, had to find the courage to go against the tide, capable of intercepting students' needs but also of being attentive to their subjective dimension without jeopardising its social mission, its ethical, inclusive and sustainability value (Riva, 2020). As a choice to be made to try to transform a complex situation into a constructive, but equally joyful and exciting practice, the school decided to naturally converge towards a comprehensive and complete pedagogical approach (Acosta et al., 2019) that was not only to address the single verified problem, but through an experience in which the subject could talk about his or her own history and make use of this experience in a systemic-relational perspective on several levels, was to:

1. Improving the relationship between school staff and students, paying attention to the language used so as not to use offensive words and expressions;
2. Contribute to generating a cultural change aimed at student understanding and awareness of error, so as to foster the construction of a model of a peaceful and exciting school;
3. Improving the relationship with civil society, which must take charge of permanent and constant education;
4. Improving the quality of school life through a more meaningful and productive presence both individually and socially;

5. Increasing the value of the educational success of so-called 'fragile' pupils in terms of performance in the study subjects and transversal skills;
6. Developing the willingness and ability to want to correct a behaviour, in a free and spontaneous way in order to think critically about oneself, as an act of resistance and opposition to the habit of letting oneself go (Hooks, 2020a, p. 32-33), through the involvement of all school staff called upon to support and encourage students since enthusiasm is generated by a collective effort (Hooks, 2020a);
7. Respect clear and consistent rules, and above all aimed at not privileging anyone but ensuring fairness of treatment, which is known to produce greater effectiveness (Thapa et al., 2013; Thornberg, et al., 2018), to assume responsible and above all conscious behaviour;
8. Making the community more sustainable in terms of relationships also includes the elimination of all forms of inequality, as a supportive and healthy climate supports students to develop higher levels of assertiveness, empathy and other social skills (Were, 2017).

Indeed, it is well known that restorative practices with a comprehensive approach and with the involvement of all actors in a school context produce significant improvements in both attitudes (social skills and self-esteem of participants) and behavioural measures (delinquency, disciplinary referrals, school performance, graduation rates) also in relation to the duration of interventions (McCold, & Wachtel, 2002). An intervention that is restorative of the individual student, but transformative for the entire school community, represents a democratic practice that everyone converges towards because it represents a model of educational practice that can highlight how, more participative and more serene students are more likely to change their behaviour in a positive direction also as a result of better collaboration with those in charge of the school (Wachtel, 2016). In this specific case, the aim of the Einstein-Lentini Comprehensive school was to implement an intervention that would help its students develop social and emotional skills to facilitate the re-establishment of relationships, to improve collaboration, and to create a sense of belonging to a community, in which every existence is intimately linked to that of others. These elements are fundamental for improving behaviour

in the classroom and in the community as a whole, school performance, and for fostering quality attendance, peaceful coexistence and well-being (Drewery, 2014; Morrison, 2015). The proposal was also promoted so that the entire school community, through a collective effort, could draw out from each pupil the skills to improve the liveability and well-being within the school community and the ability to collaborate in educational activities within the school and in civil society, so as to make each pupil capable of interacting and being productive in a perspective of sustainability. Activating the partnership with local stakeholders meant for the school to seek new proximity collaborations for the children's education and to build a single body with it, understood as a space for educational reflection. Relating with external agencies became an opportunity to come out of an isolation that prevented it from performing its educational task in the best possible way, to improve its social function and to give the school assessment process the chance to fulfil a global task, not to limit it to being a thermometer that only measures the level of learning of contents, but to authentically assess the maturity of the children, their sense of citizenship, their ability to be responsible in building better environments in which they live in a shared and democratic way.

The proposal was brought to the attention of the collegiate bodies of the comprehensive school and then to civil society to promote short and long-term actions that included the dissemination and acceptance of the project proposal, training meetings with teachers, students and students' families, training meetings with the students', teachers' and students' parents' representatives, the drawing up of the table of 'critical actions' to which corresponded in a restorative perspective the relevant educational actions to be freely chosen, the certification attesting to the social commitment of solidarity, care, sustainability by a mixed evaluation group made up of teachers, students and students' parents. In essence, the educational intervention comprised five moments considered essential:

1. Boys who had committed 'critical' actions of any kind were given the opportunity to speak so that they could hear what they had to say;
2. The moment of awareness of the critical action committed through an educational action that was not to turn out to be a humiliating and frustrating moment for the pupil but an emancipating practice,

- an educational act that liberates and heals, a work of self-definition in which the generative identity is in continuous becoming never separated from that of others [...] so that the sharing of the experience could create awareness that translates into a clear conception of committed pedagogy [...] in an individual and collective movement (Bocci et al., 2022, p. 77-78), a privileged time and space in which to demonstrate an understanding of who has been harmed and how (Thorsborne & Vinegrad, 2008, p. 29);
3. The school had to adopt an attitude not of exclusion and punishment but of understanding, affection, closeness and inclusion, and remedial action had to be based on these principles;
 4. The sustainability assessment of the remedial action performed by the pupil;
 5. The young people were given the opportunity to narrate the learning experience, as through the telling of their version of the story they used what S. Kalogeras calls an ancient human technology (Kalogeras, 2013), the therapeutic, formative, orientative and transformative power of which is also known from a systemic-relational perspective (Batini 2010; Cavell, 2010; Batini 2015, 2019).

The first moment was considered fundamental to improving the quality of relations between the different actors in the school community and, in general, the quality of the experience, as it was crucial that the pupils understood the usefulness and educational function of what they had to do and not interpret it as an exercise of power by the management and an attempt to publicly humiliate them. Supporting the Student voice paradigm (Flutter & Ruddock, 2004, p. 135) was the best and most democratic way for the school to facilitate dialogue and rapprochement between the parties as well as the best way to handle conflicts between students where there had been verbal and non-verbal offence. In such cases, it sometimes becomes difficult to establish who is right and who is not. The possibility of a debate between those who allegedly suffered the offence, those who committed it, the teachers and the management can facilitate the interpretation and understanding of how the events occurred. Moreover, recounting what had happened became

an opportunity for teachers to help their pupils also to develop skills in argumentation, managing emotions, listening to the thoughts of others, expressiveness, time management, welcoming diversity, and understanding the reasons and feelings of others. This procedure, therefore, was considered the most suitable to restore harmony and balance in relations between students and between students and teachers. In order to support a systemic-relational change perspective, the involvement of all the school staff and actors outside the school context, appropriately and previously trained, to educate pupils to have proactive, pro-social attitudes, and to manage the possible embarrassment arising from the pupil's exposure to an unforeseen educational experience, was fundamental in order not to disregard the expectations and objectives of the action (Acosta et al., 2019). Moreover, having attributed some of the pupils' misbehaviour to a complex problem that also included a lack of affection in the pupils and of extracurricular educational support, the school had decided to adopt, for these particular cases, an approach geared towards affectivity and the promotion of the pupils' sense of self-efficacy and esteem, the management of their emotions, through continuous expressions of encouragement to transform attitudes, language and behaviour, some of them being already very much affected by feelings of shame and frustration. Table 1 describes the main elements of the remedial actions carried out by the pupils over three years of the project and reported in the teachers' evaluation rubric.

Table 1. *Skills assessment reporting*

Pupil type	Critical action committed	Selected restorative action	Type of educational intervention	Mode of activity	Learner-reported learning outcomes and competences
No. 3 pupils 1st and 2nd year secondary school	Verbal and physical bullying against fellow students	Care and support activities in a family home for minors	Care education	Pupils engaged in childcare activities	Reduced misconduct, better academic performance, caring skills and hosting skills
No. 2 pupils 1st and 3rd year secondary school	Verbal and physical bullying against fellow students	Care and support activities in a children's home	Education for reading, reception and care	The pupil engaged in book reading activities with minors	Improved inclusion and welcoming practices; improved social skills (e.g. empathy, awareness and responsibility); pro-social behaviour;

No. 2 pupils 3rd and 4th year sup. sec.	Classroom vandalism with destruction of desks	Restoration and carpentry activities in a family home and school	Manual skills education	Pupils repaired desks they had completely destroyed with the help of school staff	Reduction of misconduct (e.g. bullying); less use of exclusionary disciplinary measures (e.g. notes and suspensions); improvement of social and emotional skills (e.g. empathy, awareness and responsibility); promotion of fairness; pro-social and positive behaviour;
No. 1 pupil 4th year Upper Sec.	Act of vandalism to theatre workshop equipment in particular to the curtains in the theatre workshop room	Accompaniment in the performance activities of a community for minors at social risk	Emotional education	The pupil together with other classmates and some school staff created new tents	Reducing deviant behaviour, developing responsibility and caring attitudes
No. 1 pupil 3rd year Upper Sec.	Act of vandalism to library books. The pupil scribbled several books	Reading, archiving and book lending activities in the municipal library	Social and emotional learning through book illustrations	The pupil was accompanied in reading and reflection activities and emotional management	Improved social skills (e.g. empathy, awareness and responsibility); improved emotional skills, attitudes, academic performance; development of responsibility and caring
No. 4 pupils 1st, 2nd and 4th year sup. sec.	Act of littering and defacing public green spaces by pupils caught littering and kicking up flower beds	School gardening and landscaping activities	Environmental and Citizenship Education	Pupils restored defaced greenery and engaged in landscaping activities accompanied by school staff	Reflection, understanding and implementation of the concept of sustainability, cultural transformation in schools, development of caring skills, citizenship skills
No. 6 4th and 5th grade pupils	Drug abuse by pupils caught abusing soft drugs	Care and support activities in a community for recovering drug addicts	Education for care and solidarity	Pupils were accompanied in drug abuse prevention activities and training on the effects on health, they also took care of young drug addicts	Decreasing health risk behaviour, developing greater responsibility and awareness, building safe and engaging school communities

No. 3 1st and 2nd year pupils	Religious verbal offence by pupils towards other pupils	Care and support activities in a community for foreigners	Intercultural Education	Pupils were accompanied in care activities by children of other nationalities and without parents	Inclusive culture and reducing inequalities; self-awareness; capacity building for peaceful conflict resolution; improving positive peer relations; promoting equity; valuing differences
No. 6 pupils 2nd and 3rd year sup. sec.	Public lewdness of 4 pupils caught in effusion in the gymnasium and 2 pupils in the bathroom	Training activities at a social cooperative	Sexuality education	No. 4 pupils (2M and 2F) were caught lewdly in the gymnasium and no. 2 pupils in the bathroom	Better management of emotions and feelings, greater sense of responsibility and awareness, greater sense of trust in the school community
No. 4 pupils 4th year sup. sec.	Defacing and defacing walls in a public place. The pupils were caught on school cameras defacing the walls of the building	Restoration of school walls	Citizenship Education	The pupils were helped by school staff to restore the walls	Development of responsibility and awareness, sense of belonging to a community, social and citizenship skills
No. 4 pupils 3rd and 4th year secondary school	Verbal offence of a sexual nature by some pupils towards fellow pupils	Education activities on respect for diversity at a training institution	Education on sexuality and diversity	Pupils were trained with sex education activities	Safer schools; inclusive culture and reducing inequalities; promoting equity;
No. 4 pupils 3rd and 4th year sup. sec.	Verbal insults of a physical nature by two pupils towards the Italian teacher and by two pupils towards a mathematics teacher	Training activities at a training organisation	Education in corporeity	Pupils were trained through activities to educate them about their bodies and respect for diversity	more positive school climate and better social relations between teachers and students conflict management; emotional and social skills

Table 1. In skills assessment reporting, offenses committed, educational actions and skills explored are highlighted

The table shows that the pupils caught engaging in critical behaviour are predominantly male (35 out of 40). An interesting datum is that relating to the type of deviance into which the critical behaviour was falling. In fact, out of 40 critical behaviours, 29 (72% in light gray) fall in the area of social deviance, while 6 (15% in dark gray) fall in the area of moral deviance,

3 (about 7% in white) fall in the area of religious deviance and finally 2 (about 5% again in light gray) in the area of legal/social deviance (defacement of walls). With regard to the results that the remedial educational activities have produced, a more positive school climate, a greater sense of community, better social relations and greater cooperation between the subjects are evident. Nevertheless, there is evidence of better individual scholastic performance of the pupils involved in the remedial actions, but also of the other pupils in the classes to which they belong. In other words, it seems that the action generated a widespread positive influence to the point of activating processes of cultural modification not only of the classes involved but of the entire school. With regard to competences, the pupils involved in the reparative actions, but also the others who indirectly played a role in the reintegration process, seem to have been able to develop social and emotional competences, of expressiveness, of awareness and responsibility, but above all of citizenship and care. Thus two boys, respectively from the 3rd D (high school of science with language specialisation) and 4th C (high school of science with applied science specialisation):

“The restorative practice experience made me realise that one can make mistakes, but that an approach aimed at understanding the fragility of children is useful in understanding the effects that wrong behaviour can have on others. Doing something for others with the help of the school and others in the area helped me to understand how important certain values are and to develop a greater capacity to live with others, to accept myself for who I am, not to be afraid to show my emotions and feelings. I felt welcomed, understood and accompanied throughout and today I feel an active part of this school community” (pupil 3 D).

This repair experience helped me to transform my idea about my school. Today I realised that my school wants to value me and take care of my growth. I had the opportunity to develop a path that helped me bring out parts of me that I was repressing. I will continue after school to engage in collaborative activities to help those in need. Through this experience, I have improved my ability to be with others, to accept those

who are different from me. My school and the co-workers were like parents who took care of me (Pupil 4C).

With regard to the critical issues and limitations encountered by the school, two in particular stand out: the non-total involvement of all the teachers, since a small number of them did not believe too much in the effects that an educational project of error repair can have, and the risk of transforming a practice into a self-referential propaganda tool for the school, which may be distracted from understanding what the real perception of the problem is and the importance of having to invest all its resources, in a collective sense, to achieve results. Poor management of the practice, moreover, could easily turn into an instrument of power that, instead of guaranteeing every pupil the possibility of an edifying educational experience, could expose critical pupils to frustrating and humiliating situations and, consequently, accentuate inequalities.

3. DISCUSSION

The results of the project proposal show how, in about three years of activity, about 40 critical behaviours were matched by just as many spontaneous initiatives of educational reflection that were able to act to develop serene relationships and strong bonds between children and between children and adults, wellbeing at school, transversal skills and the strengthening of social-relational skills, as well as greater autonomy, the development of identity, awareness and responsibility (Lerner et. al., 2011). In order to establish the type of reparation, with respect to the misbehaviour assumed, the pupil was invited to reflect on the act performed, a reflection that almost automatically turned into a request to repair the damage done. Thus to an offence of a xenophobic nature the student's choice almost always fell to doing a month of care and assistance at an association that hosted people from other nations, to a behaviour of taking soft drugs the choice was oriented towards volunteering at a rehabilitation community for drug addicts, a writing on the walls of the school corresponded to some weekends repainting the entire façade,

a defacement of the school gardens corresponded to a few weekends dedicated to gardening and cleaning the school grounds from all forms of organic and inorganic waste, the breaking of some school desks corresponded to a few weekends of DIY with wood, of course, with the complicity and support of the school staff. Finally, the moment when each student was given the opportunity to recount his or her reparative experience became a formative space in which individual and collective reading and reflection alternated fluidly and educated the subjects to acquire a narrative, observational, reflective, hermeneutic, transformative *forma mentis* (Liverano, 2021). The story told by a student who has just embarked on a remedial action represents the link between what he has committed and what he has learnt, between his past and his present, between unexpressed potential and expressed potential, what holds together two different moments of the same life, its transformation, change, tracing its horizon of meaning. Stories help the subject to create a bridge between memory and the present and to grasp the general and no longer fragmented vision of his or her existence (Liverano, 2021), they are a tool for expanding the boundaries of one's world and offer the subject the possibility of placing his or her experiences against a broader and more meaningful background (Batini & Giusti, 2010). And in this case, they have served to bring home the possibility that each student has to expand his or her range of action within and beyond a school community. Storytelling is an effective antidote to the loss of meaning in educational and work contexts, to media bombardment, and to the disintegration of the self (Liverano, 2021) and, in this case, proved functional in understanding the value of a meaningful and productive presence at school. The stories help the subject enter into the historical flow, become aware of what has been accomplished and transform behaviour, and, in a shared group analysis, clarify objectives and help understand that within a community one shares a common origin and perspective. The children were able to understand the meaning of their mistakes and trace different learning trajectories and behaviours. Sharing opinions, learning, and the effects of a narrative carried out in a group, moreover, turns out to be a powerful tool for creativity and innovation, as well as for enhancing skills and meta-competences (Batini & Giusti, 2009, 2010). Ultimately, the project carried out by the Lentini-Einstein Comprehensive school reinforced what other studies

have already been able to highlight (Kehoe et al., 2018; Gregory et al., 2015; Farr et al., 2020; Norris et al., 2019), namely that interventions involving restorative practices not only represent alternative forms of error management and reparation, but meaningful moments for pupils “to tell their opinions and emotions, lower the level of disciplinary disparity between students of different races, cultures and genders, participate proactively in school decision-making processes” (Lodi et al., 2021), develop life skills, and reduce school dropout and dropout (Rideout, et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). In this specific case, it fostered the development of social and emotional skills that enabled the promotion of pro-social behaviour. In addition, the individuals involved in the activities demonstrated improved relationships, willingness to collaborate better with the school community, and the ability to understand and develop an awareness of mistakes, including through a greater sense of responsibility and better listening skills. The children were also able to develop a more solid and defined identity through a greater sense of trust in the community in which they felt accepted, valued and more secure, which fostered a stronger sense of belonging. Experience has shown that collaboration and a collective effort oriented towards a common goal and towards the enhancement of each pupil’s subjective experience, can be effective in improving the sense of community and trust in it, which is in turn able to reduce school inequalities, promote empowerment, processes of inclusion, equity, valorisation and well-being for all (Lustick et al., 2020; Oxley & Holden, 2021). This is one of the many reasons that lead one to think that from now on educational interventions of error repair can be used not only as compensatory practices but in a preventive key of welcoming and caring for people, relationships, and communities (Gregory, et al. 2016; Lodi et al., 2021), taking care, however, to verify that each practice is really feasible and is shaped to the characteristics of each school.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Restorative justice is an alternative educational and disciplinary approach to the traditional approach of assigning punishments as a result of school-based

offenses. This case study focused on exploring a restorative justice practice within an Italian comprehensive school. In Italy, the restorative justice approach is beginning to be used as an alternative method to punishment and as an educational method for enhancing interpersonal skills or attempting to transform attitudes and behaviors at school. In this case study, it was highlighted how a restorative justice practice acts at the individual, community and organizational levels. The key stakeholders in this educational intervention stated that the practice of justice restorative generated personal and community reflection geared toward creating a school context that is more equitable, more respectful of spaces and rules, and more relational. The effectiveness of a restorative justice intervention is revealed through its ability to promote equality and equity, to become a moment of individual and collective reflection that leads to a growth of the sense of responsibility and awareness and its ability to be an instrument of inclusion. For this reason to happen it is essential that the intervention is educational and excludes in its original design idea any form of discrimination and humiliation for those who are called to carry out a reparative task as an alternative to the classic punishment. In the concept of restorative justice, therefore, the ethical dimension occupies a fundamental role, which must be the background to every intervention in such a way that every reparative action and practice can be, for the subject, a strategy to grow and not an instrument of mortification or capable of generating discomfort and offense in turn. The effectiveness of a practice of restorative justice lies in its ability to rehabilitate the subject who has caused damage or offense, in the sense of making him aware of the effects of his gesture and helping him in a process of cultural transformation, towards a more peaceful, supportive, reflective, sustainable model, in which the community no longer plays the role of judging subject, but of organ that supports, supports and helps in difficulty. This is why the effectiveness of a restorative justice practice also depends on its ability to enable a subject of social and emotional skills that help him to manage his social dimension with more balance and harmony and to weave meaningful relationships. In this sense, the school community has the fundamental role of designing the most effective and efficient solutions to be educational and help those in difficulty to develop knowledge and skills that act on character and personality, to promote new lifestyles, more peaceful and

supportive. If the school community, as a system of people, fails to support this idea of education, that is, aimed at supporting and helping its members in a fair and inclusive way to favor the process of emancipation and freedom, it will have failed in its task and in its educational mission. For this reason it is essential that in the choice to promote new educational paradigms within school contexts there is the participation of all and, the commitment in their respective roles, is systemic and organic and not improvised and uneven. The punitive system within schools now seems to be no longer able to satisfy the desired effects, because it indisposes even more students who do not feel understood, acting negatively on their motivation and involvement in educational actions, but above all because, as a model it does not allow to support the needs of students of freedom, expressiveness, to have a voice and a central role in schools. The choice of adherence to a model of restorative justice must therefore be able to represent a cultural object and be promoted and shared by all. Differently where there will be teachers who will promote different educational models (punitive and restorative), there will be students whose growth process will be characterized by a style of behavior full of doubts and insecurities.

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