

Restoring Relationships in Congregations

A workshop in compassionate consciousness, covenants, and
restorative practices

Presented by CERG - March 7, 2015



*Out beyond ideas
of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field.
I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down
in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language
- even the phrase "each other" -
do not make any sense – Rumi*

Rev. Dr. LoraKim Joyner

amoloros@gmail.com

www.oneearthconservation.org

UU Metro NY Right Relations Consultant

Nonviolent Communication Certified Trainer

Center for Nonviolent Communication

(www.cnvc.org, cnvc@cnvc.org, 1-505-244-4041)

Covenants and Restoring Relationships In Your Congregation and Your Life

Rev. LoraKim Joyner, DVM, amoloros@gmail.com

UU Metro NY District Right Relations Consultant

A Green Paper for Opening Conversation

What covenants are:

Covenants are a deep, abiding promise between equals to partner with each other and that which is bigger than ourselves to work for a just and loving world. -<http://www.uua.org/governance/covenant/>

1. The covenant is an invitation for us to the work of promising and accountability.
2. The covenant is a process and an ever present call for us to change and grow.
3. The covenant is a process to heal and nourish ourselves, so we can nourish the world.
4. The covenant is an explicit vision of how we wish to be in relationship with the world. It is not just between members of the congregation. It is with all of life.
5. The covenant is a guide and commitment on what each of us as individual members will work on to help our relationships with others flourish.
6. The covenant is a guide and commitment on what the leaders, policies, and practices of the congregations will do to support healthy and flourishing relationships.
7. The covenant is a promise which is a work of art, which is the art of spiritual practice, which is a practice of the heart.
8. The written covenant by itself involves higher cortex thinking and reasoning, but a living covenant also involves the limbic system and processing of emotional input and output. The limbic system is a much slower learner than the cortex, and requires repetition. We engage in “rewiring our neurological systems” so we can have greater choice on how to feel and act in the world, and how to nurture our relationships.
9. The covenant calls us to move from judgment, blame, and violence towards seeing all beings as having inherent worth and dignity, and acting with integrity according to this understanding. In other words, the covenant calls us to practice the First Principle.

What covenants are not:

1. A measure of correct behavior. They are not used to say who is right or wrong, who belongs in the congregation, who is a better UU, or who has more inherent worth and dignity than another.
2. A substitute for these policies and practices: Disruptive Behavior Policy, Conflict Management Protocol, Staff Relations Guide/Personnel Manual, Right Relations Team, and Restorative Practices.
3. A one year process where a document is written, and then ignored.
4. A means to avoid all conflict, or to assure that individuals will always feel safe and comfortable. A covenant invites us to feel everything and to be present to what is.

What makes covenants work:

1. A commitment from individuals to engage with the covenant with their heart. This includes working with "their stuff" and to improve their emotional, social, and transspecies intelligence, and engage in faith development and spiritual practices.
2. A commitment of the leaders to become proficient in emotional, social, and transspecies intelligences and model good relationships and practices.
3. Prominence of the covenant in all aspects of congregation practices, policies, faith development, and worship.
4. A commitment to a process by which to provide training, practice, and restoration. This includes ongoing training and workshops, a Disruptive Behavior Policy, a Conflict Management Protocol, Staff Relations Guide/Personnel Manual, Right Relations Team (or Compassionate Communication team) and Restorative Practices.
5. A collective understanding that the covenant calls us to grow our ability to love with all hearts, and to act compassionately from that love, which will take all our hearts, minds, and hands can offer.

You cannot break a covenant or be out of covenant. You can only ask yourself if you are engaged with the covenant with a promise of the heart, and if the leadership guides the congregation to support these efforts of the heart. "Heart" means fully integrating the mind, body, and souls/spirit. You can ask others if their heart is engaged with the covenant, the work, and the vision, and if not, ask them how they might be supported in engaging or reengaging. - Rev. LoraKim Joyner, DVM

Restorative Practices:

Restorative practices are part of a social science that integrates developments from a variety of disciplines and fields — including [education](#), [psychology](#), [social work](#), [criminology](#), [sociology](#), [organizational development](#) and [leadership](#)— in order to build healthy communities, increase [social capital](#), decrease crime and antisocial behavior, repair harm and restore relationships. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restorative_practices)

Restorative Practice Functions:

- reduce crime, violence and bullying
- improve human behavior
- strengthen civil society
- provide effective leadership
- restore relationships
- repair harm

Difference between restorative justice and restorative practices:

The notion of restorative practices evolved in part from the concept and practices of [restorative justice](#). But from the emergent point of view of restorative practices, restorative justice can be viewed as

largely *reactive*, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs. *Restorative practices* also includes the use of informal and formal processes that precede wrongdoing, those that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing.

Resources

Emotional Intelligence: the ability to perceive, manage, evaluate one's own emotions.

Social Intelligence: the ability to perceive, manage, evaluate other's emotions and the capacity to effectively negotiate complex social relationships and environments.

Transspecies Intelligence: the ability to understand and use emotional and social intelligence, communication, and behavior across species lines for the mutual benefit of all

Violence: any thought, word, or deed that treats a being like an object or diminishes a being's sense of value or security.

Nonviolence: attention to the intrinsic worth of every being; speech and action that respects or honors each being's value and security needs.

Nonviolent Communication (NVC): <http://www.cnvc.org>

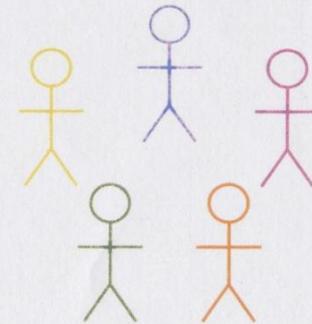
Restorative Circles: <http://www.restorativecircles.org/>

Rev. LoraKim Joyner DVM: amoloros@gmail.com, 914.948.1696

Transforming Church Conflict: Compassionate Leadership in Action. Deborah Hunsinger and Theresa F. Latini. 2013.

Restorative Circle

*Offered within the context of a Restorative System;
A chance to speak and be heard*



Pre-circle

1. What happened?
2. Meaning it has?
3. Inform
 - Describe process
 - Who is needed to resolve
 - Consent

Circle

1. Ground in the present
2. Investigate the past
3. Agree future plans

Post-circle

(revisiting our agreed actions)

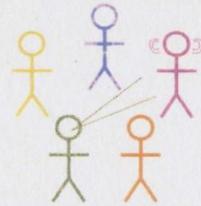
1. What happened?
2. Meaning it has?
3. How satisfied are we with the consequences of our actions?

A community self-care process

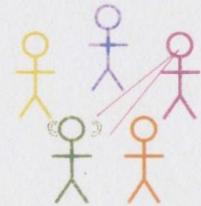
Restorative Circle

Mutual Comprehension (Ground in the present)

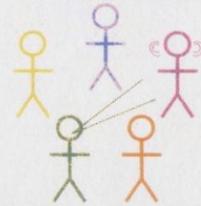
What would you like known, and by whom, about how you are right now in relation to the event and its consequences?



What did you hear?

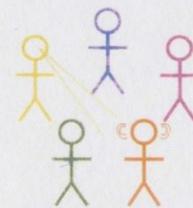


Is that what you want understood?

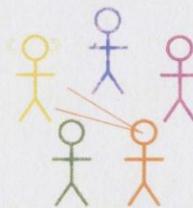


Self Responsibility (Investigate the past)

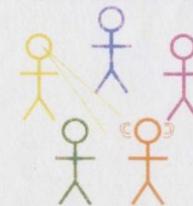
What would you like known, and by whom, about what you were looking for at the moment you chose to act?



What did you hear?

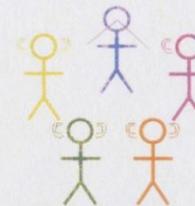
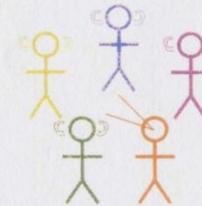
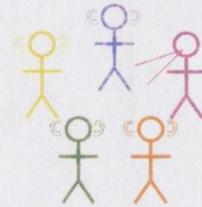
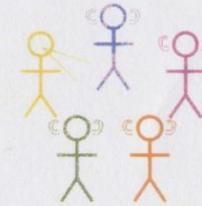


Is that what you want understood?



Agreed Action (Agree future plans)

What would you like to see happen next?



Restorative Questions

Before, During, and After a Circle

For those who acted:

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

What needs were motivating you to act in the way you did?

What have you thought about since?

What or who has been affected by what you did? What you didn't do? In what way?

What do you think you need to do to make things right?

How can we make sure this doesn't happen again in the future?

For those who received and the general community:

What did you think when you realized what had happened?

What impact has this incident had on you and others?

What needs were motivating you to respond in the way you did?

What has been the hardest thing for you?

What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

How can we make sure this doesn't happen again in the future?

Guide to Listening and Being Heard During Conflict

Rev. LoraKim Joyner, DVM (amoloros@gmail.com)
UU Metro NY Right Relations Consultant

A Green Paper Inviting Discussion and Feedback

Nurture Relationships Before, During, and After Conflict

- a. Breathe
- b. Slow down
- c. Nurture ourselves and make requests to support our basic and most compelling needs
- d. Meet in person or on phone
- e. Emphasize quality of connection
- f. Translate what you hear and say into needs
- g. Let go of end results (strategies)
- h. Make requests, not demands

Before the Conversation with Conflict

1. Take Care of Yourself – Address your basic needs

We communicate better (listening and being heard) when we have enough sleep, food, water, and other needs met. Seek to meet your needs (or ask others for support in meeting these needs) as best you can before talking with someone else.

2. Take Care of Yourself – Self Empathy

Communication is difficult when we have judgment of ourselves and others. Identify your emotions and feelings¹ as best as possible and correlate these emotional and body states with needs¹ being met or not met. Select the more important needs to you in this matter, and write, reflect on, or say out loud:

No wonder I feel (insert one or two feelings you have)_____.
I need (insert one or two needs that correspond to your feelings)_____.

3. Empower Yourself – Take responsibility for your feelings

Taking responsibility for our own feelings helps move us from judgment of ourselves and others, and also opens us to different strategies for meeting individual and group needs. This aids in communication as well as coming up with actions and changes in behavior that nurture us and the group. Use the same feelings and needs identified in the previous step and write, reflect on, or say out loud:

I am responsible for feeling (insert one or two feelings you have)_____.
Because I need (insert one or two needs that correspond to your feelings)_____.

¹ See attachment for a list of feelings and needs

4. Practice Curiosity, Openness, and Empathy of Others

You are more likely to be heard and your ideas considered if others perceive that you do not judge or blame them, or are making demands of them. You are also a better listener if you can put yourself into “their shoes.” Identify what emotions and feelings that might be going on in another person, and make a guess as to what their needs might be. Select what you consider might be the most important feelings and needs going on in the other person in this matter, and write, reflect on, or say out loud:

No wonder they feel (insert one or two feelings they might have)_____.
I’m guessing they need (insert one or two needs that correspond to their feelings)_____.

5. Visualize and Practice the Conversation

Studies have shown that practicing and visualizing how to engage in compassionate communication actually produces more compassionate and productive communication. There is a 12 step visualization/practice guide in *Words Can Change Your Brain: 12 Conversation strategies to build trust, resolve conflict, and increase intimacy* by Andrew Newberg.

6. Increase Your Understanding, Skills, and Experience in Effective and Compassionate Communication

Refer to the reference list for books and resources you might consider.

During the Conversation

7. Continue Practicing the Previous Steps

8. Connect with Empathy, Meaning, and Clarity

Communication improves when there is emotional resonance between people, such as with empathy. Empathy in this situation means being open to feelings and needs, of yourself and of others. To practice empathy, translate what you are hearing and saying into needs. For instance, you might say that you are irritated about how someone ignored you during a meeting. To increase the chance for others to empathize with you, understand you, and to derive meaning from the conversation you could instead say that you are irritated because you value being heard and respect. If someone else is talking and says, “I am angry with you because you wrote that insulting email,” you might ask them, “I’m guessing that you really long for fairness and respect?”

Twelve steps for connecting and communicating:

1. Relax
2. Stay present
3. Cultivate inner silence
4. Increase positivity
5. Reflect on your deepest values
6. Access a pleasant memory
7. Observe nonverbal cues
8. Express appreciation

9. Speak warmly
10. Speak slowly
11. Speak briefly
12. Listen deeply

9. Make Requests, not Demands

People value choice and autonomy, as well as fairness. They also want to be heard and to have their needs considered. When asking that someone do a particular action or behavior, therefore, it is more likely to be heard with a willingness to meet your needs if you can frame the sentence (and your body language) in such a way that they hear a request, and not a demand. When making a request then, be prepared to hear a no, and to empathize with the other person who might be reluctant to meet your request at first. Be prepared to come up with alternate methods for meeting your needs, and be open to actions that will also meet the needs of others. Frame your requests with these words, or a similar phrase:

Would you be willing to (action or connection request): _____

After The Conversation

10. Repeat and practice

Understanding others is a process and is best undertaken in the spirit of a slow and open process. To be understood and to understand others may take repeated attempts, and for time to elapse. Communication does not always happen in the first attempt, or even several attempts later. In fact, the first attempts might even seem like a failure, especially if trust needs to be regained and relationships restored. After the conversation therefore repeat the previous six steps in regards to the issue, and to what happened during the conversation. After doing so, consider setting a time to reengage with others

Words Commonly Used to Express Feelings

These words refer to my own internal experience rather than to external circumstances

FEELINGS WHEN NEEDS ARE NOT MET

Gloomy

Crestfallen
Dejected
Depressed
Despairing
Despondent
Downhearted
Dreary
Forlorn
Hopeless
Melancholic
Miserable
Mopey
Mournful
Pessimistic
Resigned
Somber

Sad

Agony
Disappointed
Discouraged
Distressed
Disenchanted
Dissatisfied
Grief stricken
Heartbroken
Hurt
Morose
Full of pain
Overwhelmed
Sorrowful
Unhappy

Upset
Woeful
Wretched

Afraid

Apprehensive
Cautious
Fearful
Frantic
Guarded
Hesitant
Insecure
Jittery
Leery
Mistrusting
Nervous
On edge
Panicky
Startled
Suspicious
Terrified
Wary
Worried

Longing

Yearning
Desirous
Hungry

Envious

Jealous
Longing

Anxious

Agitated
Concerned
Edgy
Fidgety
Frenzied
Harried
Hysterical
Impatient
Irritable
Overwhelmed
Perturbed
Stressed
Uneasy
Unnerved
Unsteady

Cautious

Hesitant
Reluctant
Resistant
Shy
Skeptical
Tentative
Timid
Unwilling

Alarmed

Appalled
Frantic
Incredulous
Paralyzed
Shocked
Surprised
Upset

Bored

Exhausted
Fatigued
Heavy
Lethargic
Listless
Tense
Tired
Weary

Aloof

Apathetic
Arrogant
Cold
Contemptuous
Detached
Disdainful
Grouchy
Indifferent
Nonchalant
Passive
Prickly
Unconcerned
Withdrawn

Ashamed

Deflated
Embarrassed
Guilty
Insecure
Mortified
Regretful

Annoyed

Angry
Cranky
Cross
Disgusted
Enraged
Exasperated
Fed-up
Frustrated
Hateful
Hostile
Indignant
Infuriated
Irritated
Miffed
Resentful
Resistant
Ticked off
Turbulent
Vengeful
Vexed
Vindictive

Confused

Ambivalent
Bewildered
Curious
Doubtful
Hesitant
Perplexed
Troubled
Uncertain
Unclear
Undecided

FEELINGS WHEN NEEDS ARE MET

Delighted

Amused
Blissful
Ecstatic
Elated
Enchanted
Excited
Exhilarated
Exuberant
Gleeful
Happy
Joyful
Jubilant
Overjoyed
Radiant
Splendid
Tickled

Calm

Carefree
Cheerful
Comfortable
Composed
Confident
Contented
Expansive
Free
Good-humored
Mellow
Peaceful
Relaxed
Relieved
Satisfied
Serene
Tranquil
Trusting
Vulnerable
Warm

Absorbed

Alert
Alive
Animated
Confident
Curious
Eager
Energetic
Engrossed
Enthusiastic
Fascinated
Focused
Hopeful
Inquisitive
Inspired
Interested
Intrigued
Invigorated
Optimistic
Spellbound

Amazed

Adventurous
Affectionate
Astounded
Awe
Compassionate
Confident
Dazzled
Expectant
Friendly
Hopeful
Loving
Open hearted
Playful
Proud
Surprised

Appreciative

Buoyant
Glad
Grateful
Gratified
Effervescent
Exhilarated
Intense
Pleased
Refreshed
Thankful
Touched
Upbeat
Wide-awake

INDIVIDUAL HANDOUT 6.5

Words which Express Thoughts instead of Feelings

THOUGHTS: Experience or Evaluative Words	POSSIBLE FEELINGS:	THOUGHTS: Experience or Evaluative Words	POSSIBLE FEELINGS:
abandoned		manipulated	
abused		mistrusted	
attacked		misunderstood	
belittled		neglected	
betrayed		overpowered	
blamed		overworked	
bullied		patronized	
caged/boxed in		pressured	
cheated		provoked	
coerced		put down	
cornered		rejected	
criticized		ripped off/screwed	
disliked		taken for granted	
disrespected		threatened	
distrusted		thwarted	
dumped on		trampled	
harassed		tricked	
hassled		unappreciated	
ignored		unheard	
insulted		unloved	
interrupted		unseen	
intimidated		unsupported	
invalidated		unwanted	
invisible		used	
isolated		victimized	
judged		violated	
left out		wronged	
let down			

Universal Wants (Needs or Values)

- Needs are how life comes through all humans so that we may nourish the world as we flourish
- Needs are resources required to sustain and enrich life.
- All humans have the same needs - emphasis changes over time and between individuals
- Needs make no reference to any specific person doing any specific thing
- (Strategies are the specific actions we use to achieve needs)
- Conflict happens at the level of strategy, not at the level of needs
- By emphasizing needs as we "let go" of specific strategies, we connect to life and to one another

Survival: Sustenance, nurturance, procreation, sensory stimulation

Protection: Security, safety, justice, respect, consideration

Interdependence: Cooperation, community, inclusion, mutuality, support, to belong, competence

Empathy: Understanding, connection, love, acceptance, affection, compassion

Regeneration: Celebration, gratitude, mourning, leisure, play

Transcendence: Presence, inspiration, evolution, beauty, harmony, flow, space

Well-being: Healing, peace of mind, balance, ease, trust, appreciation, balance

Honesty: Authenticity, self-connection, self-expression, clarity, learning, integrity, growth

Autonomy: Freedom, choice, creativity, empowerment, power with

Meaning: Purpose, contribution, competence, integrity, to matter

Four "D's of Disconnection

1. **Diagnosis:** judgments, analysis, criticism & comparison
2. **Denial** of responsibility
3. **Demand**
4. **Deserve**-oriented language

Four Components of NonViolent Communication

1. **Observation**
2. **Feelings**
3. **Needs**
4. **Requests**

1. Observation (fill in the blanks below)

When I hear you say _____

or

When I see you _____

2. Feelings

I am feeling _____

3. Needs

Because I am needing _____

4. Requests

Action Request:

Would you be willing to _____?

or

Connecting Request:

Would you be willing to tell me what you understand me to be saying?

or

Would you be willing to tell me how you feel when I tell you this?

Before and During Conversation

Self Empathy: No wonder I'm feeling _____,

I long for _____.

Other Empathy: No wonder they are feeling _____,

I'm guessing they need _____.

Nonviolent Communication Learning Resources and Materials

Rev. LoraKim Joyner, D.V.M. (amoloros@gmail.com)

Recommended Books

- *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* - Marshall Rosenberg (the classic)
- *Nonviolent Communication Companion Work Book* - Lucy Leu (to lead study groups in congregations)
- *Respectful Parents, Respectful Kids: 7 Keys to Turn Family Conflict into Cooperation* - Sura Hart and Victoria Kindle Hodson (to apply the principles to parenting)
- *The No-Fault Classroom* – Sura Hart
- *Being Genuine: Stop Being Nice, Start Being Real* - Thomas D'Ansembourg (new, more advanced book)
- *Connecting Across Differences* - Jane Marantz Connor & Dian Killian (examples geared to young adults)
- *NVC Toolkit for Facilitators* - Raj Gill et al.
- *Grok it! 150 Exercises and Games* - Jean Morrison (communicateforlife.com)
- *Transforming Church Conflict* - Deborah Van Duesen Hungsinger
- *Words Can Change Your Brain* - Andrew Newberg, Mark Robert Waldman
- *Social Intelligence* - Daniel Goleman
- *Emotional Intelligence* - Daniel Goleman

NVC Training Organizations, Websites, and Resources

- NVC Academy: flexible online and teleconference trainings www.nvctraining.com
- Bay NVC: regular trainings in San Francisco area, frequent trainings throughout US www.baynvc.org
- Website with lots of games/books/ideas for children: <http://www.nvcworld.com>
- Family camps: <http://www.cnvc.org/family-camps>
- Center for Nonviolent Communication: Varied trainings in US and internationally www.cnvc.org
- Information/learning: www.nvcwiki.org, www.growingcompassion.org
- Restorative Circles: <http://www.restorativecircles.org/>

Unitarian Universalist

- UU Peace Ministry Network for Peacemaking: <http://www.uupeacemakers.org/>
- UU Statement of Consciousness "Creating Peace" 2010 <http://www.uua.org/socialjustice/socialjustice/statements/13394.shtml>
- UU Email list serve: <http://lists.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/uu-speakingpeace> where you can register to receive occasional emails from other UU's practicing Compassionate Communication
- UU NVC Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CompassionateCommunication?v=wall>
- UU Children Nonviolent Communication Curricula, Heart Talk: <http://heartvistas.com>