**Creating a Restorative Library Culture** <https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/creating-a-restorative-library-culture.html>

Broadly defined, restorative justice is an approach to repairing and addressing harm done within a community. Related to this approach, restorative practices provide proactive ways to build the relationships that can help to address and repair some of that harm done. Oak Park Public Library is using restorative practices to better serve both community and staff. In this session, you’ll learn about restorative justice and restorative practices, and how these practices can guide a powerful shift in communities and within an organizational culture. The webinar will have actionable strategies you can start practicing immediately, as well as methods for you to build buy-in from your organization as you get started on this impactful work.

Presented by: **Stephen Jackson**, Restorative Justice Practitioner/ Trainer, Director of Equity and Antiracism and **Tatiana Swancy**, Restorative Practices Coordinator, both from Oak Park Public Library

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| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **View Through a Restorative Justice Lens** |
| Broadly defined, **restorative justice** is an approach to repairing and addressing harm done within a community. Rooted in restorative justice philosophy, **restorative practices** focus more on preventative action and on how individuals engage and interact with one another. While restorative justice is generally reactive in nature, restorative practices are deliberate and proactive approaches that aim to strengthen relationships between individuals and the communities they belong to. Think about what you’ve learned about restorative justice practices and how they align with your library’s current mission, programs, and services. Discuss or consider facets of your work that might benefit from learning how to apply restorative practices (e.g., library code of conduct, behavior issues, security policy). What ideas for new initiatives emerge as you discuss or consider this? |

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| **Restorative Practices in Action** |
| The presenters shared examples of restorative practices that you can apply to your work and life. Remember that these practices are designed to help build relationships and to find deeper understanding of the unique experiences of those around us. Begin to implement practices you've learned, starting small, for example:* At your next meeting have the group stand in a circle and ask everyone to share one word to describe how they’re feeling coming into the space (check in), and as the meeting concludes, circle up again and ask for a one-word description of how they are feeling leaving the space (check out).
* Learn about and use Circles with staff or patrons (See Oak Park’s [Introduction to Circles as a Restorative Practice](https://youtu.be/8iAlvC5TBJk)).
* Learn more about [Using Restorative Questions](https://www.iirp.edu/news/time-to-think-using-restorative-questions) in challenging behavior conversations.
* Encourage staff to stand near the entrance of the building when the library opens, to greet and welcome patrons as they come into the building.
* Suspend judgement when engaging with patrons or staff. Everyone has a story.

When you’re ready for next / bigger steps:* Assess what’s working/what isn’t (and why) at your library, or in your programs and services. Use this information to help to identify where you might implement restorative practices in the future.
* Identify 2-3 potential community partners whose missions align with your library’s mission and invite them to talk about needs and opportunities for co-designing a Restorative Justice initiative to pilot together.
* Write a proposal that aligns with your organization’s mission and reference models from the field as examples of the work happening in library spaces.
* Pilot. Pilot. Pilot. We all are in unique environments and our patrons and staff have different needs. Start small prior to creating a full proposal for something that may not apply to your community.
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| **Learning from Other Libraries** |
| Explore current initiatives and outcomes from libraries who are using restorative practices and restorative justice in their work. Consider or discuss how these align with your community needs and interests and what similar initiatives might look like at your library.1. [Spokane Public Library – Community Court](https://www.spokanelibrary.org/community-court)
2. [Pima County Public Library – Conflict as Opportunity: Library Restorative Practices for Youth](https://www.ala.org/pla/education/onlinelearning/webinars/ondemand/pla2018-conflict)
3. [Hennepin County Public Library – Urban 4-H Program](https://www.supporthclib.org/empowering-youth-through-urban-4-h)

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| **Build Buy-in across Organization** |
| The work of restorative justice requires buy-in from both staff and leadership to be most beneficial to the library and community. Consider or discuss any resistance you anticipate from folks about learning and applying restorative practices. Identify potential responses to their concerns and work towards a clear and shared commitment to creating a restorative library culture. |

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| **Action Plan: (include next steps, when, who, etc.)** |

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