

# RESTORATIVE JUSTICE IN FAMILY WORK IN SINGAPORE

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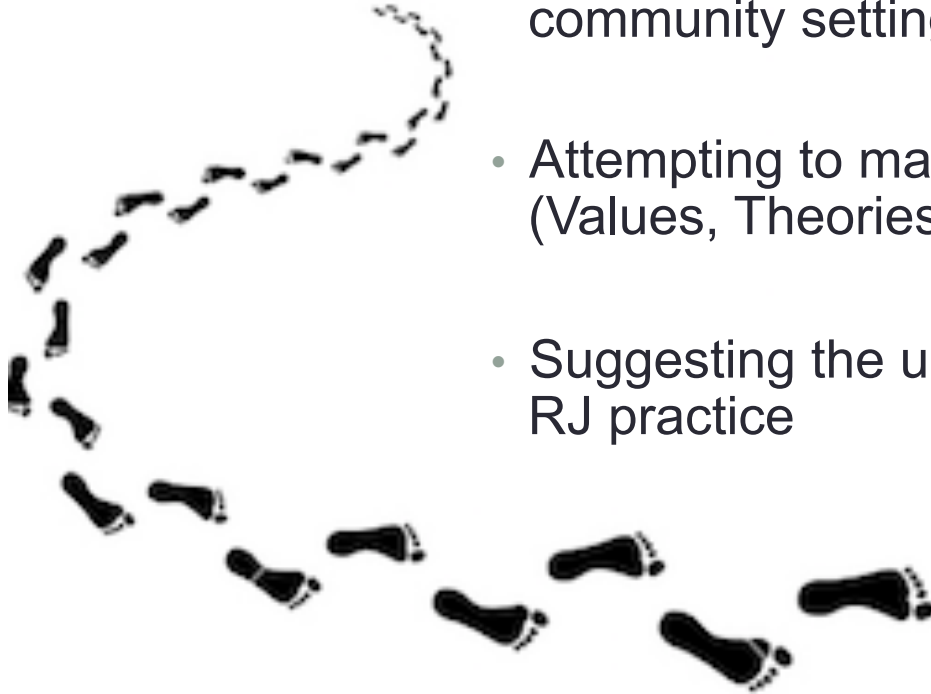
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*Presented at the IIRP 23<sup>rd</sup> World Conference*

# WHAT IS THIS SHARING ABOUT

- Sharing of personal practice of RJ in a community setting
- Attempting to make practice explicit (Values, Theories & Principles)
- Suggesting the use of a tool for reflective RJ practice



# Background

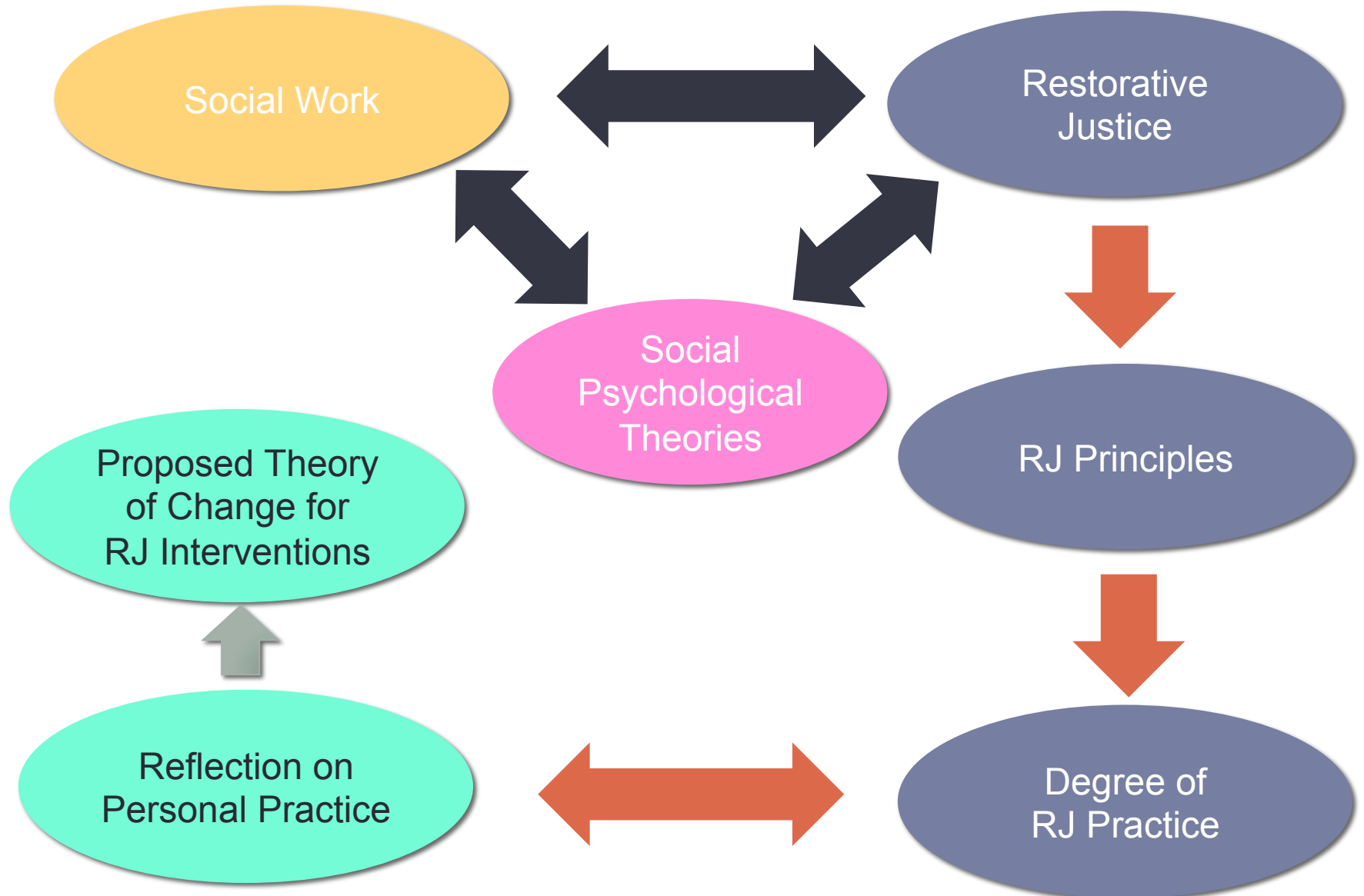


## Concerns:

- Financial
- Housing
- Parenting
- Child Abuse/ Neglect
- Youth Delinquency
- Domestic Violence

Poverty Transformation With-in Empowered Communities

# Content



# Social Work & Restorative Justice

Social work is a “practice-based profession and an academic discipline that **promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people [and] engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing**”

*International Federation of Social Workers, 2014*

Restorative justice is “fundamentally concerned with **restoring social relationships, with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships**; relationships in which each person’s rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied”

*Llewellyn and Howse, 1998*

# Social Work Values & RJ

	Social Work Value	Restorative Justice
1	Service	Social workers step back to facilitate, encourage and enable individuals and families to craft their solutions; they do not seek to impose their ideas and suggestions.
2	Social Justice	RJ emphasises the voices of affected parties to be heard, that they have a say in the resolution of issues, not withstanding their power and status in the community or society.
3	Dignity & Worth of the Person	Social workers focus on the deed rather than the doer and treat individuals with respect and care by listening to and appreciating their stories and perspectives, and creating platforms to enable their voices to be heard by relevant stakeholders to enable a holistic response to their challenges.

Service

Social Justice

Dignity & Worth

Relationships

Integrity

Competence

# Social Work Values & RJ (2)

Social Work Value	Restorative Justice
4 Importance of Human Relationships	<p>Restorative practice is a “social science that studies how to build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision-making” (Wachtel, 2013).</p> <p>Restorative justice leverages on interpersonal relationships to promote sustained transformational change.</p>
5 Integrity	<p>Restorative justice ensures that its process is “fair, respectful, transparent and non-oppressive” where individuals are encouraged to tell the truth about what had happened and how they are feeling and to take responsibility for their actions and behaviours (Umbreit and Armour, 2011).</p>
6 Competence	<p>Being a practice-based profession, social workers strive to enhance their competency through training and reflective practice in their use of restorative justice interventions.</p>

Service

Social Justice

Dignity & Worth

Relationships

Integrity

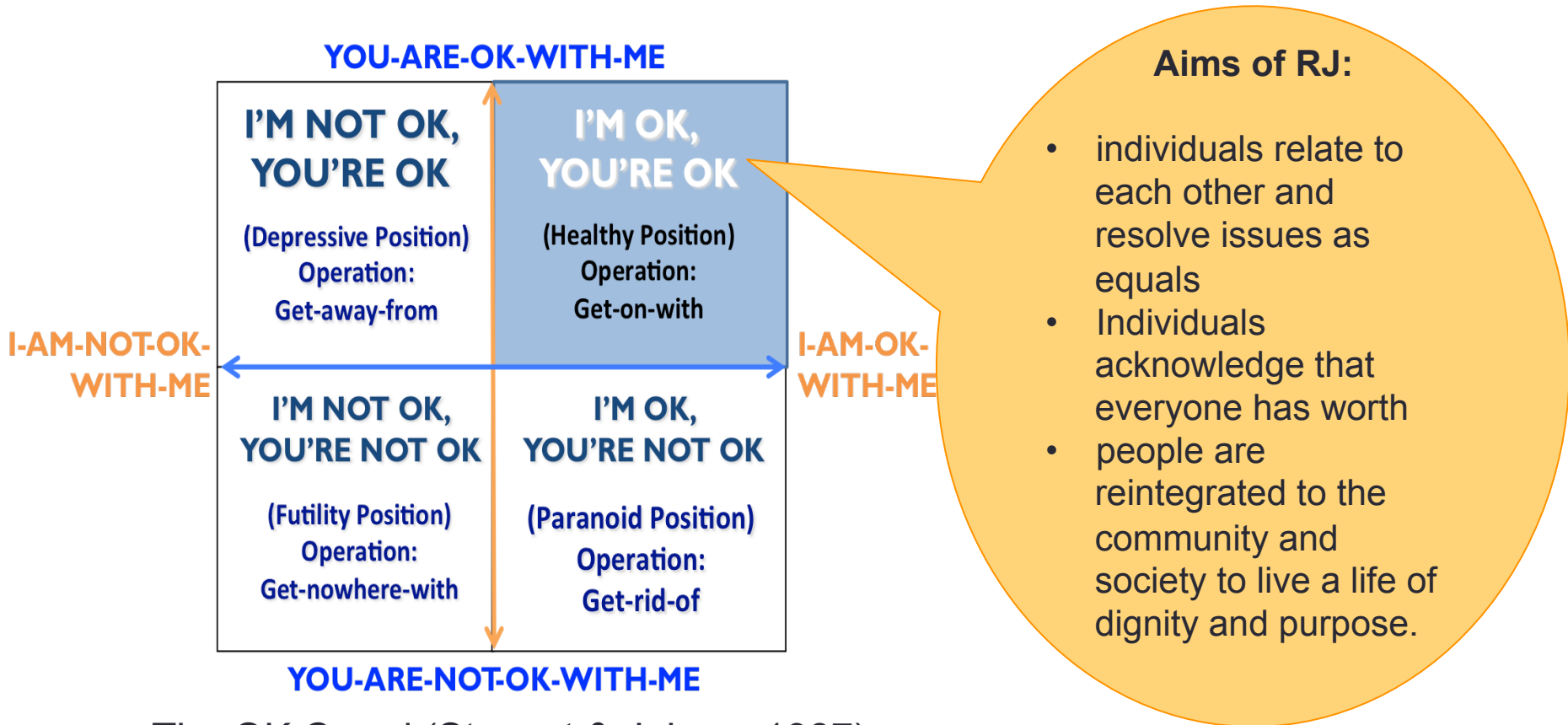
Competence

# RJ & Social Psychological Theories

1. Transactional Analysis (Eric Berne)
2. Attribution Theory of Motivation & Emotion (Bernard Weiner)
3. Strengths-Based Perspective: ABCD (McKnight & Kretzmann)
4. Compass of Shame (Donald Nathanson)
5. The Relationship Window (Dorothy Vaandering)



# RJ & Transactional Analysis (TA)



The OK Corral (Stewart & Joines, 1987)

# RJ & Attribution Theory of Motivation & Emotion



When causes of an act or behaviour are perceived as being of internal locus, stable and uncontrollable (Weiner, 1985):

- the individual's expectancy for positive change decreases
- other people would also view the individual as being unamenable to change.

Consequently, the individual loses his/ her sense of pride, **feels ashamed and hopeless**

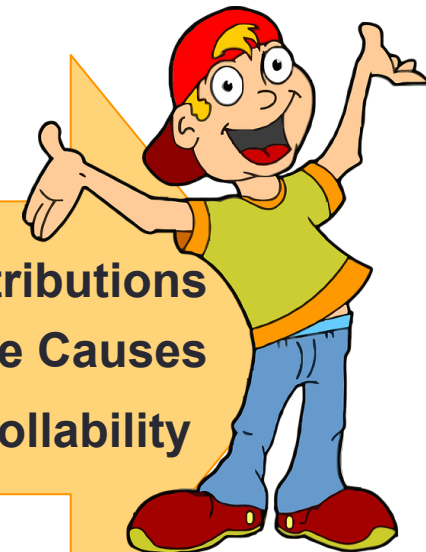
## Restorative Justice:

Internal Attributions  
Stable Causes  
Uncontrollability

Focus on  
the Act  
& Elicit  
Empathy

External Attributions  
Unstable Causes  
Controllability

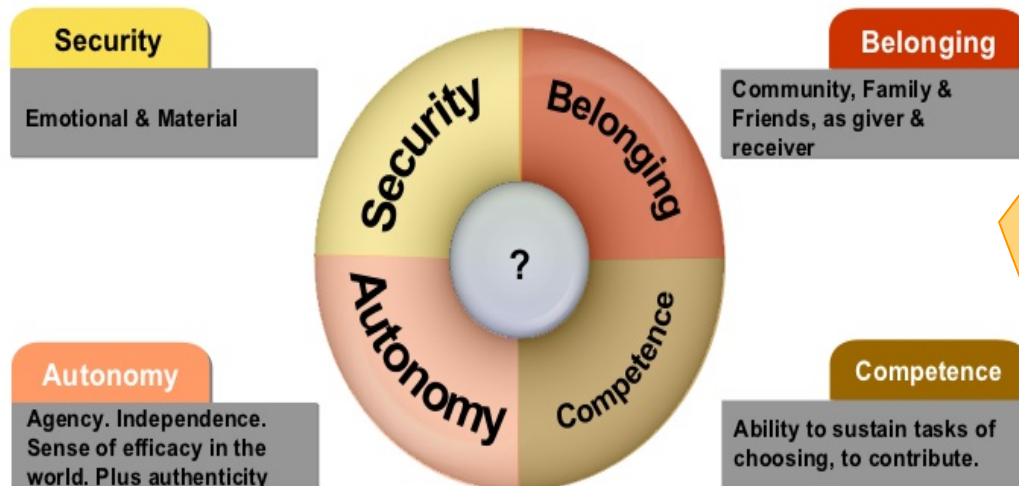
Translation of shame to guilt to take actions to make things right & Restores pride



# RJ & Asset-Based Community-Driven Development (ABCD)

ABCD seeks to uncover or discover strengths and assets, builds relationships and mobilise people and groups in the community to provide mutual support and work towards positive change:

1. Everyone has gifts
2. Relationships build a community
3. Everyone cares about something



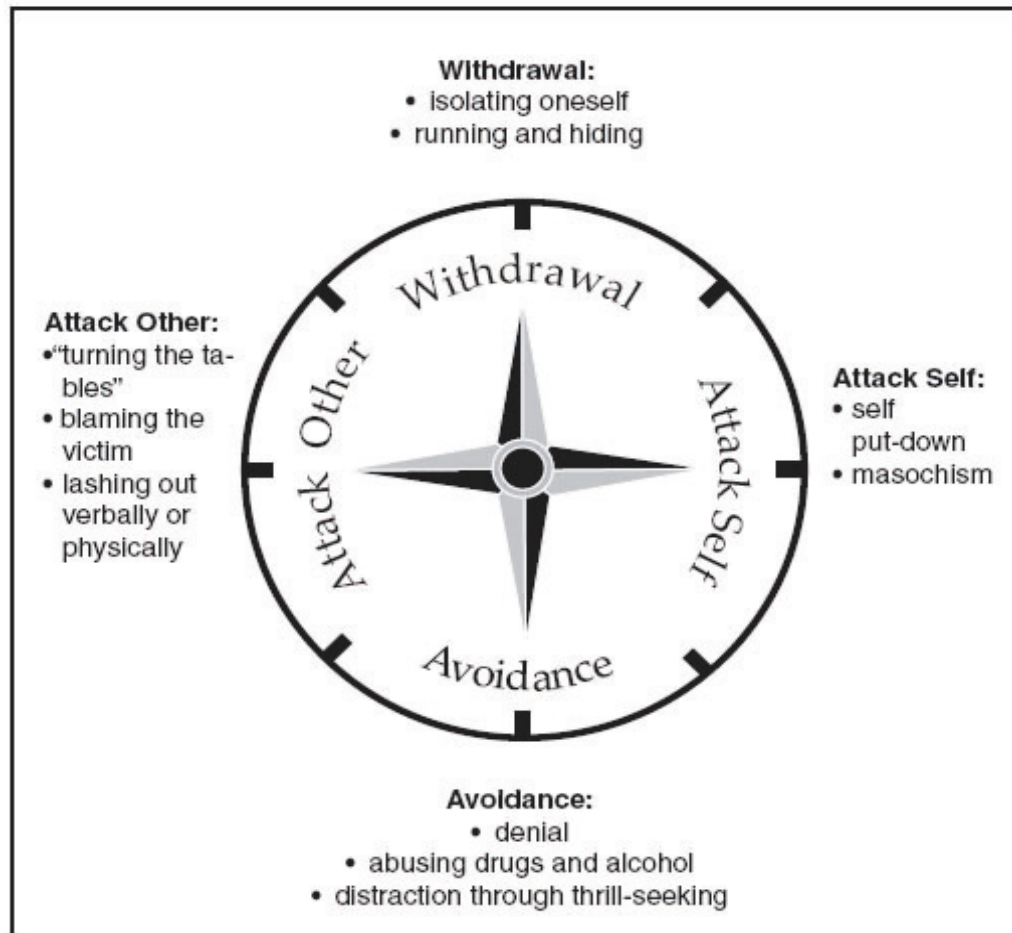
Russel, C. (2010)

**RJ works through the community to facilitate the reintegration of individuals and groups by leveraging on:**

- individuals' interest (stake) in the community
- Individuals' capacity to provide the necessary support to each other

**Such promotes a connected & strengthened community, a community that is inclusive rather than divisive.**

# RJ & Compass of Shame



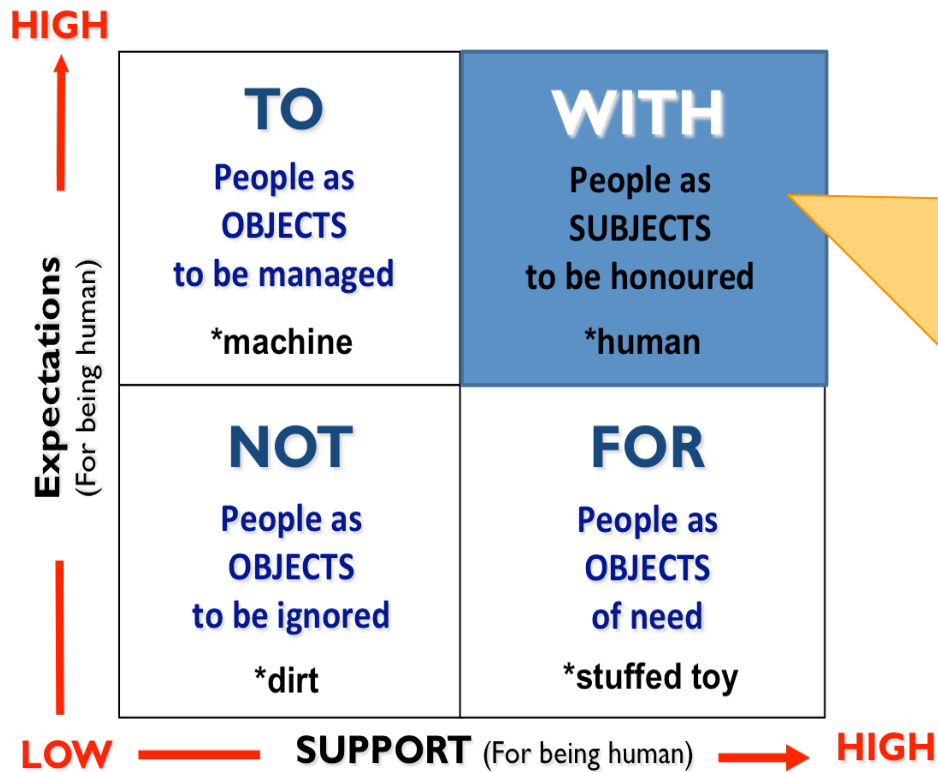
The use of RJ allows:

- Individuals’ perspectives be heard for mutual understanding
- people to come together to face and work on the real issue for restoration of self and relationships.

Compass of Shame

(adapted from Nathanson, 1992, in Wachtel, 2013)

# RJ & The Relationship Window



Being relationship-focused and believing in the dignity and worth of individuals, RJ advocates **working with each other**, thereby facilitating **empowerment and promoting change and growth within, between and amongst individuals.**

The Relationship Window  
(Vaandering, 2013)

# Practice Makes Explicit – *RJ Principles Defined*



# Practice Makes Explicit – RJ Principles Defined

	Human Dignity	Empathy	Respect & Support
<b>Practice (Author)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising each individual has worth</li> <li>Focusing on the deed and not the doer</li> <li>Being restorative to facilitate re-integration of individuals and groups</li> </ul>	Taking the perspective of others to see things from their point of view	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suspending judgments and adopting a ‘not-knowing’ stance to encourage individuals to express their views</li> <li>Appreciating the narratives of others</li> <li>Providing emotional support and garnering support for each other</li> </ul>
<b>Terry O’Connell</b> Explicit Restorative Framework	Restorative Philosophy: Restorative dialogue that focuses on harm and relationships	Create conditions for a safe environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To deal with vulnerabilities</li> <li>Builds trust and positive experience</li> </ul>	
<b>Llewellyn et al</b> Restorative Approach Principles	Relationship Focused: Aim is to establish “just” relationships that reflect equal respect, care/ concern and dignity	Comprehensive/ Holistic: Being relational in its understanding of issues and harms	



# Practice Makes Explicit – *RJ Principles Defined*



**Practice  
(Author)**

**Terry O’Connell**  
Explicit Restorative Framework

**Llewellyn et al**  
Restorative Approach Principles

## Engagement & Collaboration

- Striving to work “WITH” others, rather than being in the “TO”, “FOR” or “NOT” domains
- Providing a safe environment to facilitate sharing of experiences by each individual and trust building for solution-building

Relational Style:  
Working ‘With’: High expectations & High levels of support

Contextual/ Flexible:  
Processes and practices that are flexible and responsive to context.

## Firm & Fair

- Being clear in expectations and boundaries
- Encouraging individuals to voice their needs and concerns
- Mobilising support to enhance individuals’ capacity to succeed in tasks agreed for purpose of re-integration

Fair Process:  

- Engagement
- Explanation
- Expectation clarity

Dialogical or Communicative:  
To assure encounter and participation with one another



# Practice Makes Explicit – *RJ Principles Defined*

	Empowerment & Ownership
<p><b>Practice</b> (Author)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their future</li> <li>• Encouraging individuals to be accountable for their decisions and actions</li> <li>• Enabling the community or society’s agency to own the issue, establish the solutions and act to resolve the issue, rather than being dependent on government’s mechanisms</li> </ul>
<p><b>Terry O’Connell</b> Explicit Restorative Framework</p>	<p>Socratic Dialogue: Restorative Questions</p>
<p><b>Llewellyn et al</b> Restorative Approach Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subsidiarity, Inclusion &amp; Participation: Commitment to inclusion and participation towards understanding harm caused and contributions to restore relationships</li> <li>• Democratic/ Deliberative: Process to connect the legitimacy of decision making to inclusive processes through which deliberation takes place</li> </ul>

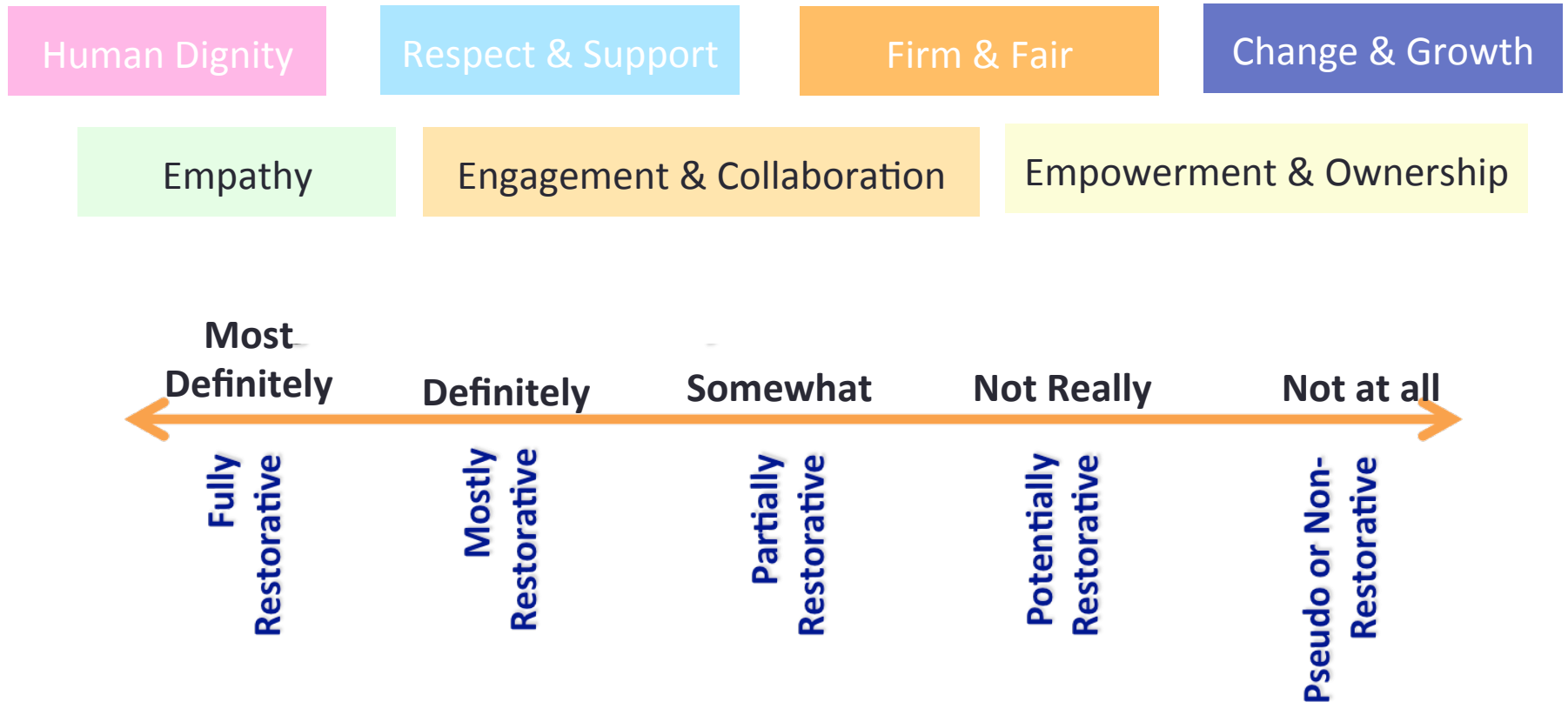


# Practice Makes Explicit – *RJ Principles Defined*

	Change & Growth
<p><b>Practice</b> (Author)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change and growth happen when one works with one another, being responsible for one’s future and accountable for one’s decisions and actions</li> <li>• Change and growth happen at both the individual and community/ society levels where the individual is re-integrated into a community/ society that is strengthened and equitable via the restorative justice process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Terry O’Connell</b> Explicit Restorative Framework</p>	<p>Ideal Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are able to make sense and meaning of their lives;</li> <li>• Are able to identify what is most important in all that is happening;</li> <li>• Get to work out what needs to change and what their part will be in this change process;</li> <li>• Learn to build and sustain healthy relationships</li> </ul>
<p><b>Llewellyn et al</b> Restorative Approach Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship Focused: Aim is to establish “just” relationships that reflect equal respect, care/ concern and dignity</li> <li>• Forward-focused, Solution-focused &amp; Remedial: Understanding what has happened to understand what needs to happen to address the past with a view to creating conditions for restored relationships in the future</li> </ul>



# Case Illustrations



Degrees of Restorative Justice Practices: A Continuum (Zehr & Gohar, 2003)

# Key Questions to Explore the Degree of RJ Practices

Kek S L 2017

Restorative Justice in Family Work in Singapore: A Tool for Reflective Learning

## KEY QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE THE DEGREE OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES – A REFLECTION TOOL

The main purpose of this tool is to enable deliberate practice to improve one's practice. Therefore the rating is subjective to one's experience. The practitioner may gather feedback from the participants to be considered in the rating. It is highly encouraged that practitioners engage in peer learning with the use of the tool to facilitate a robust and critical discussion.

No	Principle	Practice	Question(s)	Rating* & Remarks
1	Human Dignity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising each individual has worth</li> <li>Focusing on the deed and not the doer</li> <li>Being restorative to facilitate re-integration of individuals and groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the practice reiterate the focus being the deed/ act/ issue rather than the persons?</li> <li>Does the practice reflect equal social relationships, that everyone is treated with equal dignity, respect and concern?</li> </ul>	
2	Empathy	Taking the perspective of others and attempting to see things from their point of view	Does the practice allow for individuals to hear and appreciate each other's perspectives?	
3	Respect & Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suspending judgments and adopting a 'not-knowing' stance</li> <li>Appreciating the narratives of others</li> <li>Providing emotional support and garnering support for each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the practice allow each individual's voice to be heard in a non-judgmental manner?</li> <li>Does the practice involve all relevant stakeholders?</li> <li>Does the practice allow for the provision of emotional support and garnering support amongst the participants?</li> </ul>	
4	Engagement & Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Striving to work "WITH" others, rather than being in the "TO", "FOR" or "NOT" domains</li> <li>Providing a safe environment to facilitate sharing of experiences by each individual and trust building for solution-building</li> </ul>	Does the practice allow for dialogue and co-creation of solutions?	

# Key Questions to Explore the Degree of RJ Practices (con't)

Kek S L 2017

Restorative Justice in Family Work in Singapore: A Tool for Reflective Learning

No	Principle	Practice	Question(s)	Rating* & Remarks
5	Firm & Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Being clear in expectations and boundaries</li> <li>Encouraging individuals to voice their needs and concerns</li> <li>Mobilising support to enhance individuals' capacity to succeed in tasks agreed for purpose of re-integration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the practice have clarity in expectations and boundaries?</li> <li>Does the practice allow each individual to have a voice?</li> <li>Does the practice address the issue and its needs in a supportive manner?</li> </ul>	
6	Empowerment & Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their future</li> <li>Encouraging individuals to be accountable for their decisions and actions</li> <li>Enabling the community or society's agency to own the issue, establish the solutions and act to resolve the issue, rather than being dependent on government's mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are individuals encouraged to take responsibility and accountability?</li> <li>Does the practice allow the community/ society to take agency?</li> </ul>	
7	Change & Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change and growth happen when one works with one another, being responsible for one's future and accountable for one's decisions and actions</li> <li>Change and growth happen at both the individual and community/ society levels where the individual is re-integrated into a community/ society that is strengthened and equitable via the restorative justice process.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the practice facilitate individuals to learn from the situation and make efforts to change and improve in their thinking, feeling and doing?</li> <li>Does the practice facilitate individuals' re-integration into the family/ community/ society?</li> <li>Does the practice facilitate a strengthened family/ community/ society?</li> </ul>	

\* Rating:

1 - Not at all (Pseudo or Non-restorative), 2 - Not Really (Potentially Restorative), 3 - Somewhat (Partially Restorative), 4 - Definitely (Mostly Restorative and 5 - Most Definitely (Fully Restorative).

# Case Illustrations

No	Issue	RJ Approach	Intent
1	Mother faced eviction from a residential home	Case Conference	To provide a platform for mutual understanding between mother and the residential home manager for restoration of relationship and finding solutions regarding the accommodation issue for the family
2	Teen recently discharged home from a juvenile home	Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)	To establish a reintegration plan for the teen back into her family
3	Boy bullied in school by a peer	RJ Conference	To provide opportunity for the wrongdoer to make things right and to restore the relationships between the 2 families.
4	Boy recently discharged home from a children's residential home	Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)	To provide a platform for the parents and their son to voice their concerns and support they need for son's reintegration to the family.

# Case Illustrations

No	Issue	RJ Approach	Intent
5	Teen found pregnant	Family Conference	To enable the teen and her boyfriend to take ownership of their action and to hear how their action had affected their families; to provide a platform for both the teens and their parents to have a voice in deciding on the care plan for the unborn child.
6	Single mother desiring for children to be returned to her care	Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)	To provide a platform for the single mother and her family members to express their feelings about their children being placed in alternative care arrangement; an avenue for the single mother to obtain her mother and sister's support to establish a care plan to facilitate the return of her children
7	Teens caught for shoplifting in the community	RJ Conference	To enable the youth involved to take ownership of their action, to gain empathy by learning the impact of their action and facilitate the youth's reintegration into the community

# General Intent of Using RJ

## To provide a platform:

- For voices of the relevant stakeholders to be heard
- To evoke empathy amongst them through the sharing of perspectives
- To take ownership of the matter by having a stake in the decision-making of the issue
- To widen the circle of support

**It is through empathy that relationships are established, restored or strengthened.**

**It is through the relationships that individuals feel supported that they are motivated towards change and growth.**



# What Went Well...

- Human dignity of individuals upheld
- Mutual understanding
- Restoration of relationships
- Acts of accountability
- Increased in support
- Involvement of parents
- Establishment of new relationships in the community

# Learning Points



# Learning Points

## EMPATHY

- Obtain feedback from all all parties on what they had heard and understood
- Get a translator who knows RJ for effective translation
- Mindful of language

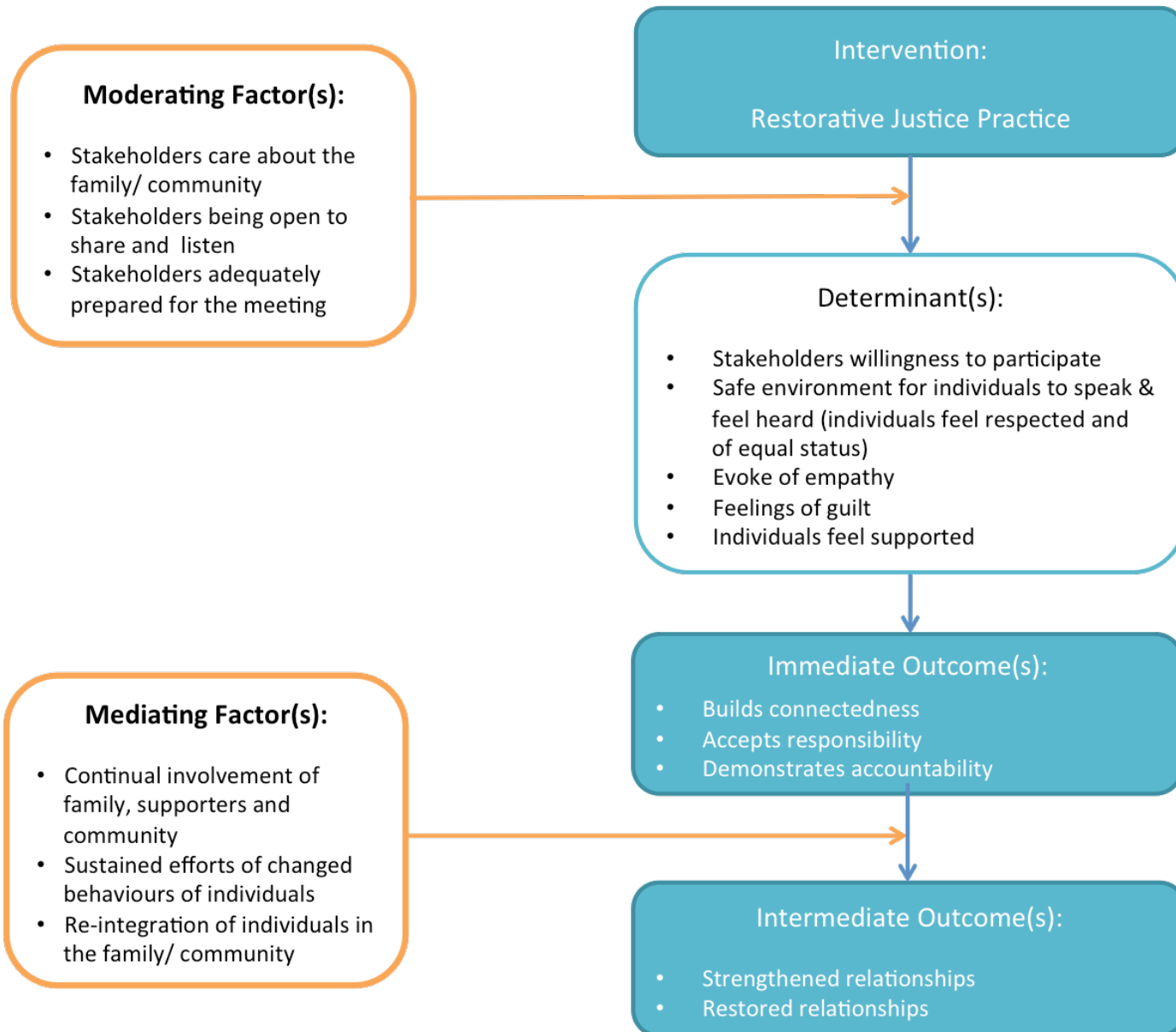
## RESPECT & SUPPORT

- Involvement of all relevant stakeholders
- Importance of preparation for the conference

## CHANGE & GROWTH

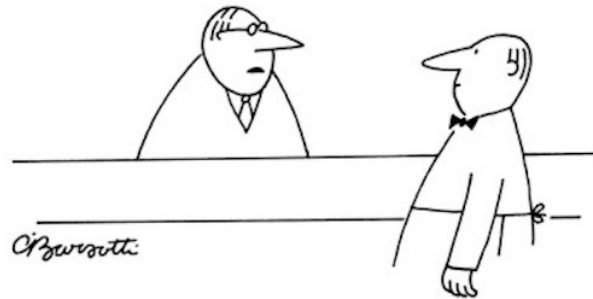
- Timeliness of RJ interventions
- Clarity of bottom-lines
- Follow-up sessions
- Support for sustainability

# Theory of Change for RJ Interventions in Family Work



# My Aspirations:

1. Social Workers in Singapore to engage in RJ practice.
2. RJ practitioners in Singapore to use the suggested key questions to reflect on their RJ practice.



*"A dash of hope, a dollop of optimism, a hint of  
courage—and gin—on the rocks."*

# Final Thoughts

**Restorative justice is a way of being,  
rather than a way of doing.**

All individuals have dignity and worth and deserve to be treated with respect by being heard and having a say in what they want in their situations and their community.

RJ is an approach that meet our needs for security, autonomy, competence and belonging, thereby enabling us to have a winning life script.

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