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Restorative Justice in a Co-Ed Greek-Letter Organization

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Action Research

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Abstract

The purpose of my action research was to examine the impact of using restorative justice practices with members of my past co-ed Greek-letter organization. My participants were alumni of the co-ed Greek-letter organization that were active members between the years of 2011-2015. I met with my participants individually and taught them about restorative justice practices. I then facilitated a series of community building circles with my participants where we reflected on our time as active members of the organization and explored how being members of the organization has impacted who we are today. We collaborated on creating ideas for community building circles for the current active members of the organization. The outcomes from this research included rebuilding our bonds as alumni of the same organization, being able to talk about difficult situations in the past of the organization, and collaborating on ways in which we can use restorative justice to help with community building and conflict resolution in the future of our organization.

Keywords: restorative justice practices, co-ed Greek-letter organization, community building, conflict resolution

Introduction

Upon learning about restorative justice and the Restorative Justice Facilitation and Leadership certificate program at the University of San Diego (USD), I knew it was something I wanted to pursue. I am drawn to restorative justice because of its holistic process that seeks to bring justice and healing to everyone involved and through collaborative active accountability and trust building, being able to reintegrate harm-doers back into the community (Karp, 2019). My own experience with the power of forgiveness made me realize that restorative justice is something that I want to practice both in my personal and professional life.

Upon further investigation as to why I am so passionate about restorative justice, I thought back to my years as a member of a co-ed Greek-letter organization at Fresno State. For the sake of anonymity in my research, I will not reveal the organization's name but will refer to it as the organization.

I had a great first couple of semesters in my organization, but my time as an active member of the organization turned very dark. There were several issues within the organization. The organization is co-ed, so there were members of all genders. There was an incident where a male member assaulted a female member. At the time, the school did not have an effective way of resolving issues such as this. The female member was distraught and upset every time she would see the male member that assaulted her. I was conflicted because I was friends with both of the members, but I ultimately chose the side of the female member, and I and many other members of the organization had shunned the male member.

The male member ended up committing suicide. After further researching restorative justice and learning about how it has worked even in situations such as assault, I thought about how this could have possibly saved my friend's life and brought peace to everyone affected by the situation. Of course, restorative justice isn't always the answer because all parties would have had to agree to the process. But I will now always wonder if restorative justice had been

used in that situation, if the outcome would have been different; if my friend would still be alive today, and everyone that was affected by the situation could know peace.

Given this experience, I want my focus on restorative justice in higher education to be on using it to resolve student misconduct in Greek-letter organizations. I truly believe that restorative justice can be a more effective way to resolve student misconduct in sorority and fraternity life, as opposed to traditional disciplinary actions. I have blamed myself for the situation that happened in my time in the organization and I believe that this project will not only help me forgive myself and other members of the organization that experienced this event, but also bring peace and justice to other organizations that could face similar situations in the future.

Background & Literature Review

Involvement in Greek-letter organizations in college can have a positive impact on student development (Baker-Zwerenz et al., 2004). However, Greek-letter organizations are often involved in issues such as alcohol and drug use, assault, harassment, sexual misconduct, bias-motivated incidents, and hazing (Allan and Madden, 2008). Throughout my literature review, I focused on research that would provide a comprehensive overview of restorative justice and using restorative practices as an alternative to formal disciplinary actions for student misconduct related to sorority and fraternity life at universities. I utilized the Copley Library's online databases and searched for "Restorative Justice in Sorority and Fraternity Life Misconduct." The following review of literature suggests that Restorative Justice is a more holistic approach when dealing with student misconduct in Greek organizations.

The concept of restorative justice originated from indigenous communities. Restorative justice isn't seen as merely a practice in these communities, but it is seen as a way of life. This is the worldview of many Native American communities and this way of life prioritizes

relationships, interdependency, fairness, shared decision making, solidarity, and healing (Davis, 2019).

According to *The Little Book of Restorative Justice for Colleges and Universities*, “restorative justice is a philosophical approach that embraces the reparation of harm, healing of trauma, reconciliation of interpersonal conflict, reduction of social inequality, reintegration of people who have been marginalized and outcast, community empowerment and participation, multipartial facilitation, active accountability, and social support.” (Karp, 2019, p.10). Karp (2019) states that “a central practice of restorative justice is a collaborative decision-making process that includes harmed parties, people who caused harm, and others to seek a resolution that includes accepting and acknowledging responsibility for harmful behavior, repairing the harm caused to individuals and the community, and working to rebuild trust by showing understanding of the harm, addressing personal issues, and building positive social connections.” (Karp, 2019, p.10).

Clark (2014) described the types of misconduct and issues commonly associated with Greek-letter organizations. Clark stated that university students involving themselves with high-risk alcohol and drug use continue to persist at dangerous levels. Clark also stated that students’ mental health issues have never been more prominent. Clark also touched on hegemonic male culture, which encourages violence, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, alcohol abuse, and other self-destructive behaviors.

Allena and Karp (2004) found that alcohol-related student misconduct is more prevalent in fraternity life. The authors also stated that fraternities and sororities are the most scrutinized for hazing even though other student organizations, such as sports teams, also participate in hazing. McClendon (2019) identified several Greek-letter organization-related issues, including alcohol and drug use, assault, harassment, sexual misconduct, bias-motivated incidents, body image disorders, mental health concerns, and hazing.

McClendon (2019) explained that universities respond to the occurrence of harm by a fraternity or sorority by initiating a disciplinary process in which there is either an administrative hearing with a conduct officer or a hearing board to determine responsibility. Clark (2014) explained that historically, most campuses have employed a traditional legal system of justice in their disciplinary proceedings, a process which often leads to resentment, alienation, and even isolation for the students involved. Although punishment for bad behavior may be warranted, after reviewing several campus websites, McClendon found that it is clear that the mission of higher education institutions is for student development to take place during the conduct process. According to Zdziarski and Wood (2008), "Contemporary practice of student judicial affairs by student conduct officers includes an expectation that student conduct officers are not merely engaging in a brief conversation to determine responsibility and to assign sanctions, but they are instead holistically attending to the developmental needs of students beyond findings of responsibility and assignment of sanctions" (p.97).

McClendon (2019) illustrated that when a fraternity or sorority makes headline news for misconduct, the outcomes usually include financial restitution, suspension of activities, revocation of the chapter charter, public apology, or a calling for the eradication of the entire Greek life system. McClendon (2019) went on to say that no reports concluded whether the sanctions or outcomes from the traditional hearing process actually repaired the damage to the harmed party or the effect the sanctions had on student development as a result of participating in the hearing process.

Clark (2014) stated that there has been little research on fraternity and sorority misconduct cases and the impact of a student development model that invites members of a harmed party and the offender to join in dialogue to repair harm. Though there is little research on using Restorative Justice as a solution for student misconduct in fraternities and sororities, articles by Clark (2014), Allena and Karp (2004), and McClendon (2019) all demonstrated that a

restorative approach may be a better approach to addressing misconduct as opposed to traditional disciplinary actions.

Zehr (2002) defined Restorative Justice as the “process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations in order to heal and put things as right as possible” (Zehr, 2002, p. 37). Clark (2014) suggested that restorative discipline promotes student development through engaging students with real community problems where both victims and offenders work together toward an agreeable sanction rather than awaiting a third party’s adjudication.

Clark (2014) suggested that although creating a strong sense of community is a principle of many college campuses, traditional disciplinary systems, which often involve progressive removal of a student from campus life, contrast with that philosophy. Clark (2014) explained that the intention of restorative justice is to engage the offenders in the community through conversing with the community members, accepting the impact of their actions, and making right to the community.

While the Clark (2014) article focused on general college student misconduct, Allena and Karp (2004) and McClendon (2019) focused on misconduct from students involved in Greek Life. In regard to building a sense of campus community, Allena and Karp (2004) presented that often Greek organizations have trouble identifying themselves as part of the larger campus community outside of their organizations. Allena and Karp gave many examples of issues that may arise when trying to implement a restorative process with a Greek organization. As mentioned before, Greek organizations are often tight communities that do not welcome people from outside their organization, which can make it difficult for facilitators from outside of these organizations to implement a restorative process.

According to Baker-Zwerenz (2004), membership within a fraternity or sorority brings friendship, social opportunities, networking with alumni, academic scholarships, and leadership

development as well as provides students with a sense of belonging and the prospect of sharing in common interests and ideals. Baker-Zwerenz also suggests that life after college for alumni sorority and fraternity members can have several positive outcomes such as increased self-confidence and assertiveness, satisfaction with college, and educational attainment. Unfortunately, inappropriate behaviors and poor choices made by some members of individual chapters on a campus have overshadowed the positive benefits of fraternity and sorority affiliation (Baker-Zwerenz et al., 2004). According to Kuh (1996), Greek letter organizations can motivate their members to undertake educationally purposeful activities and they can foster effective environments for learning. Kuh et al. (1996) and Maisel (1990) both suggest that these organizations can also have the potential to impede learning.

Clark (2014) stated that although more research needs to be done to determine the success of restorative justice in higher education, the schools that have implemented this program feel it has been effective for both the victims and offenders in a variety of cases.

This body of literature suggests that restorative justice is a more holistic approach that aids with student development when dealing with student misconduct as opposed to traditional disciplinary sanctions. The literature I found also suggested that more research on this topic is needed. A question I am sitting with now is: how effective can a Restorative Justice approach be, as opposed to a traditional disciplinary action, when addressing sorority and fraternity life student actions such as hazing, using alcohol to excess, sexual assaults, and other inappropriate behaviors and poor choices by some members of fraternities and sororities? Another question I am sitting with is how can Greek-letter organizations utilize restorative justice for community building to help prevent misconduct?

Context

My work took place remotely via Zoom from USD, a private Catholic institution located in San Diego, California. I am currently a graduate student in the MA Higher Education Leadership

program at USD. In addition to being in the MA Higher Education Leadership program, I have obtained a certificate in Restorative Justice Facilitation and Leadership from USD.

Reflecting on my experience of being a part of a co-ed Greek-letter organization and my newfound knowledge of the power of restorative justice, I can't help but think about past situations that could have ended in a better result if the issue had been addressed with a restorative approach. This is why I chose to gather alumni from my past co-ed Greek-letter organization from Fresno State and educate them on restorative justice and facilitate community building circles with them. I chose to recruit alumni that were active members of the organization the same years as I, 2011-2015. I was able to recruit 9 alumni members that were active members of the organization between 2011-2015. Amongst my 9 participants there was diversity in gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

Project Rationale

My literature review and personal experiences suggest that there is a need for restorative justice in Greek-letter organizations. There is evidence that using restorative justice instead of traditional disciplinary action in cases of student misconduct can lead not only to a better outcome for all parties involved; it can also have a huge impact on student development that traditional disciplinary actions do not provide. In addition to using a restorative process to address student misconduct in Greek-letter organizations, a restorative approach can be used to promote community building within Greek-letter organizations.

This research is important to me because I believe that restorative justice has the power to initiate healing and learning that otherwise would not happen with traditional disciplinary methods. It is also important to me because my participants are very important to me. My participants are fellow alumni of my organization, and we have all experienced both good and bad situations together related to the organization. I want us to reflect on past situations within our organization both good and bad, and I want us to think of ways in which the bad situations

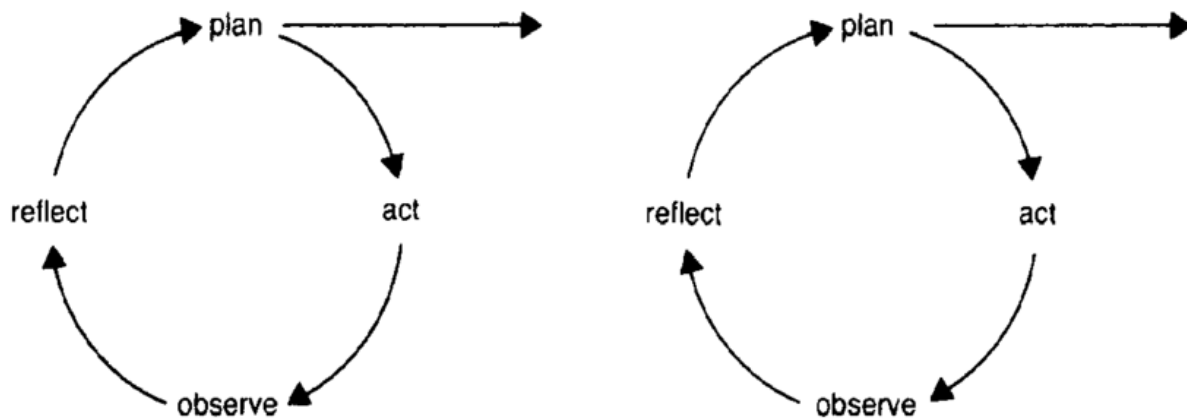
could have ended in better results and what can be done to prevent these types of negative situations from happening in the future.

Research Design

I utilized McNiff's structure of action-reflection cycles (McNiff and Whitehead, 2002, p. 41). This research design consists of four steps that may be repeated each cycle: plan, act, observe, and reflect. I was drawn to this methodology because of the possibility of repeating the steps to gain more insight or to try new approaches as knowledge is obtained through the previous cycles.

Figure 1

Structure of Action-Reflection Cycles



My epistemological stance led me to choose this method because I believe that this structure aligns well with the nature of creating and implementing community building circles. In order to facilitate a community building circle one must first plan the circle process through creating a circle script, plan a date, and invite the participants. If the community building circle will take place in person, there are many other things to plan in advance such as: location, atmosphere, props, refreshments, etc.

The next step after creating the circle script and planning the other details would be to take action through facilitating the community building circle. Through acting on facilitating the

community building circles, I observed and collected my data. After reflecting on the circle process and my gathered data, I then repeated the cycle again utilizing my reflection to help plan the next cycle.

Data Collection

My action research data collection was mostly qualitative data with the exception of one quantitative survey that I used to reassess what I would do for my third cycle after reflecting on my second cycle data. Due to the fact that all of my participants live in different cities and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all of my cycles were conducted remotely utilizing Zoom for video conferencing. I video recorded every cycle and then later transcribed the data into text for anonymity purposes.

In my first cycle I conducted virtual individual meetings with my participants over Zoom. In these individual meetings, I used the time to give my participants a brief overview of restorative justice through a powerpoint presentation. This overview included the topics of what restorative justice is, the origin of restorative justice, the principles of restorative justice, example videos of restorative justice at USD and in K-12 classrooms, and my motivations for conducting this research.

After the presentation, I gathered data on my participant's thoughts on restorative justice, what they would like to talk about in a community building circle with the other participants, and if they believe that using restorative justice would be beneficial to use in the organization. After this first cycle, I found some common themes in my data.

In my second cycle, I facilitated a community building circle with all of my participants virtually over Zoom. The main talking points of the community building circle was as follows:

- *Introduce yourself with your nickname within the organization and the meaning of your nickname.*
- *What is one of your favorite memories about being a part of the organization?*

- *In what ways, if any, has being a member of the organization influenced who you are today?*
- *What was one of the biggest challenges you have faced while being an active member of the organization?*
- *Think about the challenging experience you shared and the feelings that were associated with it. What did you need to feel better in that situation? Is there anything that you need now?*
- *What are some ways in which difficult challenges or situations of harm can be addressed in the future of the organization?*
- *What is a piece of advice that you would give to active members of the organization today?*
- *What are your honest thoughts about the restorative justice process you have been through today?*

During my cycle 2 reflection, I found that it might be beneficial for my participants and I if instead of creating a community building circle for the current active members of the organization, if we instead had another community building circle with each other. I sent out a survey to gather questions from the participants that they would like to be asked in the next community building circle.

In my third cycle, I used the questions that I gathered from my participants after the last cycle to create and facilitate another community building circle with my participants virtually over Zoom. The questions that my participants answered were as follows:

- *Do you believe you were given all the proper tools to succeed in the organization?*
- *How would we have liked to resolve conflict in the past? How can people who have bad associations with the organization heal from the past?*
- *If you could redo your candidate semester, what would you have done differently? If you could redo your time as an active member, what would you do differently?*
- *Why do we care about the organization still? Has that experience been positive so we want to share it, or negative so we want to change it for the future?*

- *Were we happy with the service we provided? Would we want to do more or less? Different kinds of projects? Did we need more funding or did we have too much money and didn't spend it wisely?*
- *How did being in the organization affect friendships/relationships*

In my fourth cycle, I gathered all of my participants virtually over Zoom to collaborate on creating a community building circle for our organization. After having learned about restorative justice and going through two community building circles, I created a Google Doc for my participants to brainstorm their ideas. I provided a basic outline that I use for creating my own community building circles for my participants to start out with. My outline included five sections to help build the community building circle including: convening, connection, concern, collaboration, and closing.

Cycle 1 Results & Findings

In my first cycle, I met with each of my participants individually over zoom and I gave them a presentation on restorative justice that included the topics of what restorative justice is, the origin of restorative justice, the principles of restorative justice, example videos of restorative justice at USD and in K-12 classrooms, and my motivations for conducting this research.

The first piece of data that I collected from my participants following the presentation was gathering my participants initial thoughts on restorative justice. The findings were that my participants were very optimistic about this process and they had a positive view of restorative justice.

The next piece of data I gathered was I wanted to know what they would possibly like to discuss in a community building circle with the other participants. I discovered a couple common themes. I found that many of my participants felt that they focused more on the organization and less on school, which ultimately led to failing or below average grades. They also wanted to explore if being a part of the organization created any strengths or weaknesses within themselves and the other participants.

Another question I asked my participants was, do they believe restorative justice would be beneficial to the organization? Some common themes I found were that many agreed that past methods for conflict resolution did not work well, and they wondered if things could have gone differently if we went back. I used my findings from this first cycle to develop a community building circle for the following cycle.

Cycle 2 Results & Findings

In my second cycle, I facilitated the community building circle that I created using the data from the previous cycle. One of the questions that resulted in some notable data was: *In what ways, if any, has being a member of the organization influenced who you are today?* I found that being involved in the organization helped most of the participants with skill development. Some common skills mentioned were the abilities for social networking, leadership development, and boundary setting. Although the vast majority of the participants agreed to gaining skills from participating in the organization and seeing this as a positive experience, there was an outlier amongst the participants that claimed that they had learned “what not to do” from participating in the organization and saw it more negatively.

Another notable question was: *What was one of the biggest challenges you have faced while being an active member of the organization?* The most common theme amongst the participants was that they spent too much of their time on the organization and not enough time on their school work. This led to poor grades in classes, with some participants even failing classes that would lead them to be on academic probation with the school and the organization.

The overall outcome of the second cycle was very positive. I discovered that after the community building circle adjourned, the majority of the participants stuck around in the Zoom room because they wanted to continue socializing with the other participants. My original plan for my third cycle was for my participants to collaborate on creating a community building circle for the active members of the organization. After observing the actions of the participants

wanting to remain in community with each other following the circle activity, this demonstrated to me that we should possibly have a second round of community building.

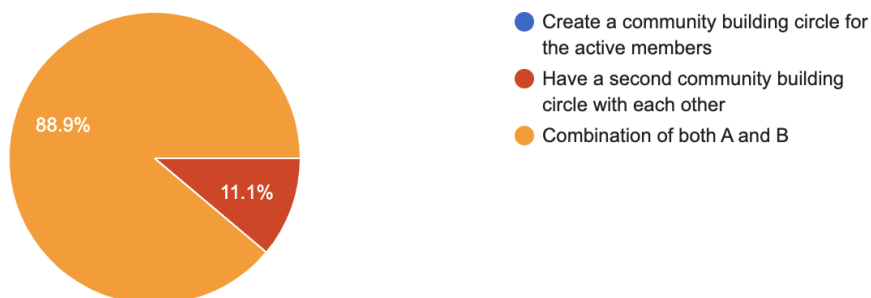
I sent out a poll to my participants and I gave them three choices, either we would continue with the original plan for cycle 3, which was collaborating on the creation of a community building circle for the actives, or we could just have a second community building circle with each other, or the option of both of the first two options. The overwhelming majority of the participants chose to do both of the first two options. Figure 2 shows the results of the poll, an overwhelming 8/9 majority for both creating a community building circle for the active members and having a second community building circle with each other.

Figure 2

Cycle 3 Reevaluation Survey Results

What should we do in cycle 3?

9 responses



These results demonstrated to me that restorative justice can indeed be a beneficial tool for building community within organizations. It also shows me that community building circles are a great tool for reuniting alumni from the same organization and rebuilding bonds with each other.

Cycle 3 Results & Findings

With the discovery that the participants wished to have another community building circle with each other, I decided that I wanted to send out a google form and have my participants choose the questions and topics we would discuss. One of the questions that they came up with was: *How did being in the organization affect friendships/relationships?* Many participants expressed that through the organization they had made life-long friendships. One of the dynamics of the organization being co-ed led to the formation of romantic relationships as well. Many couples that had formed within the organization have gotten married over the years.

Another discovery was that the participants that had relationships with people not involved in the organization had difficulties in those relationships due to the amount of time spent in the organization and the exclusivity and secrecy involved in it. Another thing that was expressed in regard to this, was that the people within the department that our organization is housed in that were not involved in the organization felt alienated by how exclusive our organization seemed from the outside. There was another question expressed asking how we think people from outside of the organization viewed us. *Were we approachable or did people view our organization in a negative light which caused them to stay away?* From the perspectives of my participants, it seemed that people outside of the organization indeed had negative views of us.

Some other questions that were posed were: *Why do we care about the organization still? Has that experience been positive so we want to share it, or negative so we want to change it for the future?* Some common themes resulting from these questions were that the participants both wanted to reflect on their experiences to bond with one another, and they also wanted to reflect on the negative experiences to come up with a plan to help the current active members in the case that similar situations happen in the future. They have a desire to establish effective procedures for the future active members of the organization in the case of these events.

Cycle 4 Results & Findings

In the fourth cycle the participants collaborated on creating a community building circle for the active members of the organization. Some of the notable questions that they came up with were

- *What is your current Probation Process and how does it empower your active members to come back and be more committed to being representatives of the organization?*
- *Are there plans in place to help active members who fall behind in their schooling?*
- *How do we walk away from the circle experience without holding any grudges, resentment, trauma, or anxiety?*
- *Is there a need to reconvene the circle at a future date? For what reason or situation?*

I was impressed by the questions they came up with because it portrayed to me that through their experiences learning about restorative justice and going through the circle process, my participants really absorbed the principles of the restorative process and it shows through the restorative dialogue suggested through these questions.

Limitations

One of the limitations with my research was that due to the various locations of all of my participants and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we were unable to have a traditional community building circle in person and opted to have our “circles” online. This was a limitation because there could have potentially been a different dynamic and outcomes if we were able to face each other in the circle formation and physically pass a talking piece around the circle.

With the nature of every cycle being conducted virtually over Zoom, another limitation was technical difficulties. There were several times when we had issues with internet

connections, audio connections, video connections, and recording malfunctions. This caused delays in starting the process which led to potentially less data because I wanted to be mindful of the time boundaries and asked my participants if they would like to stop at the original end time.

Another limitation to my research was both the sample size of my participants and the fact that all of my participants are close friends of mine. I was very pleased with having 9 participants but there might have been potential for a wider range of data if I had had more participants. It also may have been helpful if some of my participants weren't close friends of mine because my participants being close to me could have caused bias that could skew the data.

Recommendations

My first recommendation is to have recurring community building circles for alumni members of the organization. I think it would be beneficial for my participants and I to meet regularly for more community building. I feel that through this process we really bonded over the good and the bad situations in the past and I believe talking about these situations and being able to relate to each other's feelings and hearing out participants whose feelings may differ, was a very good process for promoting our collective healing.

My second recommendation is the implementation of restorative practices for conflict resolution within the organization. The majority of my participants agreed that what we had done in the past to handle conflicts within the organization was not appropriate. If we can draft a restorative circle for use when conflicts within the organization arise I believe that would be a beneficial tool for the current active members of the organization.

My final recommendation is to utilize community building activities to connect alumni with active members of the organization. I would also like to take the community building circle that we created to the active members and facilitate it for them. It would also be beneficial to teach

them about how to use restorative processes for conflict resolution and misconduct within the organization.

Conclusion

Some of the notable outcomes of my research included rebuilding our bonds as alumni of the organization, being able to talk about difficult situations in the past of the organization, and collaborating on ways in which we can use restorative justice to help with community building and conflict resolution in the future of our organization.

In my own personal experience with my research, one of my original motivations was to help my participants heal from past collective traumas. I believe that this process has indeed helped with this even though some traumas weren't directly named in the process.

In this process, I have also learned that I have helped myself heal as well. I used to not be able to talk about these situations without breaking down in the past, but now I can talk about it and use my experiences to help others in the future.

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Appendix A

Restorative Justice Powerpoint Presentation Text

What is Restorative Justice?

Restorative Justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing harm. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that allow all willing stakeholders to meet, discuss the harm that has been caused, and collaborate on how to repair the harm. This can lead to the transformation of people, relationships and communities.

<http://restorativejustice.org>

Introduction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKKhlCaf6ZQ>

Origins of Restorative Justice

The concept of Restorative Justice originates from indigenous practices from all over the world.

One common restorative practice is the restorative circle. The restorative circles that we facilitate today are modeled after Native American and Canadian First Nations traditions.

These Native traditions emphasize collectivism and community.

<https://www.sandiego.edu/soles/restorative-justice/research-and-theory.php>

Restorative Justice Principles

The foundational principles of restorative justice have been summarized as follows:

Crime causes harm and justice should focus on repairing that harm.

The people most affected by the crime should be able to participate in its resolution.

The responsibility of the government is to maintain order and of the community to build peace.

Restorative processes typically include:

Inclusion of all parties

Encountering the other side

Making amends for the harm

Reintegration of the parties into their communities

<http://restorativejustice.org>

RJ Community Building

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMp6loLDIvY>

My Motivation

Learning about Restorative Justice made me wonder about how certain situations within the organization in the past could have possibly had different outcomes if restorative processes were used to resolve them.

I believe that restorative processes are a great tool for conflict-resolution and community building within Greek-letter organizations.

I want to bring together alumni of the organization to rebuild our bonds and reflect on our time together as active members of the organization.

Summary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GCNq1KWbuag>

Appendix B

Co-Ed Greek-Letter Organization Community Building Circle

Convening:

- Land Acknowledgment and Circle Process
 - *“Like I have mentioned in our previous individual interviews, the circle process that we use today was derived from the practices of Indigenous Peoples. The Circle process that many non-Native people use today is rooted in the tradition of talking Circles that Indigenous Peoples in North America use and have used for millennia. Different Native Peoples practice different forms of the Circle process. Our Circle most closely reflects the talking Circle process practiced by the Plains Peoples of North America. In these traditions, Circles are far more than a technique; they are a way of life.”*
 - *“I also want to acknowledge that I currently live in San Diego, and the land that I reside on is the traditional and unceded territory of the Kumeyaay Nation. I want to pay respect to the citizens of the Kumeyaay Nation, both past and present, and their continuing relationship to their ancestral lands.”*
 - Post a link in the chat so participants can discover what Native land they are on.
 - *“I have posted a link in the chat that will take you to a website that will teach you what Native American land you currently reside on. Once you find out what Indigenous land you are on, please share with us out loud.”*

- Speaking Order
 - *“In in-person circles we would have a talking piece that we would pass around the circle. Since we are on Zoom, I will start us off on each question and then we will popcorn to the next person. This will determine what order we go in for the rest of the circle. While I strongly encourage engagement, I understand participants may experience a range of emotions and you can pass on your turn at any point.”*

- What to Expect
 - *“The purpose of our circle today is to build community with each other through reflecting on our time as active members of our organization. I want us to reminisce on good times and reflect on difficult times and brainstorm ideas about what could have gone differently and what pieces of wisdom we can offer to current and future members of the organization.”*

- Community Values
 - Be present and curious
 - Speak and listen from the heart
 - Speak and listen with respect
 - Speak your first draft

- Say just enough
- Assume best intentions, and own your impact
- Take the learning, leave the stories

“Does everyone agree with these values and would anyone like to add any values?”

- Mindfulness Moment
 - *“I want to start off this circle with a quote and a moment of mindfulness. “Connection is the energy that is created between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement. -Brene Brown” Let us reflect on this quote while we take three deep breaths, in through the nose and out through the mouth.”*
 - Three deep breaths together before we begin.

Connection:

- Round 1: *“What is the weather report for your mood or what is one word to describe your mood.”*
- Round 2: *“Introduce yourself with your nickname within the organization and the meaning of your nickname.”*
- Round 3: *“What is one of your favorite memories about being a part of the organization?”*

Concern:

- Round 1: *“What was one of the biggest challenges you have faced while being an active member of the organization?”*
- Round 2: *“Reflecting on the challenging experience that you just shared, what feelings were brought up for you?”*
- Round 3: *“Think about the challenging experience you shared and the feelings that were associated with it. What did you need to feel better in that situation? Is there anything that you need now?”*

Collaboration:

- Round 1: *“Think of a situation or an event that happened while you were an active member of the organization that you believe could have been handled differently. What do you think could have been done differently for that event or situation to result in a better outcome?”*
- Round 2: *“What is a piece of advice that you would give to active members of the organization today?”*

Closing:

- Round 1: *“In what ways, if any, has being a member of the organization influenced who you are today?”*
- Closing quote: *“I would like to close this circle with another quote from Brene Brown. “Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity, and change.” – Brene Brown”*

Appendix C

Circle Script Created Using Questions from Participants

- Land Acknowledgment

“The land that I reside on is the traditional and unceded territory of the Kumeyaay Nation. I want to pay respect to the citizens of the Kumeyaay Nation, both past and present, and their continuing relationship to their ancestral lands.”

- Community Values

- Be present and curious
- Speak and listen from the heart
- Speak and listen with respect
- Speak your first draft
- Say just enough
- Assume best intentions, and own your impact
- Take the learning, leave the stories

1. How did being in the organization affect friendships/relationships
2. If you could redo your candidate semester, what would you have done differently?
3. If you could redo your time as an active member, what would you do differently?
4. Do you believe you were given all the proper tools to succeed in the organization?
5. How would we have liked to resolve conflict in the past?
6. How can people who have bad associations with the organization, heal from the past?
7. Why do we care about the organization still? Has that experience been positive so we want to share it, or negative so we want to change it for the future?
8. Would we want to do more or less? Different kinds of projects? Did we need more funding or did we have too much money and didn't spend it wisely?

Appendix D

Circle Script Draft Created by Participants

Convening

- Land Acknowledgement & Explanation of Circle Process
 - Expectation/goals of the meeting
- Introduce Talking Piece
 - Mascots
 - One person should be talking at a time
- Centerpiece
 - Mascots
 - Jerseys
 - Mascots wearing a jersey
- What to Expect from this circle process
 - Designate a facilitator to lead the questions and intervene conflict when needed.
 - Reaffirm that everyone's feelings are valid and heard.
 - Allocate time for breaks throughout the process.
 - Say what needs to be said. Saying nothing is fine, don't be afraid to pass and pass the talking piece.
 - Listen with the intent of resolving an issue/concern and be present.
 - It's ok for the process to make you think.
 - Your thoughts may not align with another member that is ok.
- Community Values
 - Be kind
 - Don't take things personally
 - Speak your first draft

- Listen to understand not to respond
- Observe deep confidentiality
- Trust and learn from the silence
- When the going gets rough, turn to wonder
- Mindfulness Moment
 - Be mindful of your breath
 - A Breathing Gym exercise
 - Be present in the current moment
 - Take inventory, how are you feeling going into this meeting? Did you have a good day/bad day? Are you struggling? Can you/how do you put those feelings aside to fully participate? Are you in a good mind frame to participate?

Connection (Ice breaker questions/ community building activities)

- Example Questions:
 - Favorite ice cream flavor?
 - Where did you grow up?
 - What is a movie/song you can rewatch/listen to without getting tired of?
 - How were you introduced to music?
 - Why did you choose to attend Fresno State?
 - How were you introduced to the organization?
- Example community activities:
 - Play a game of Simon Says (practice listening skills before the meeting).
 - Play a game of hangman using words or ideals from the fraternity.
 - Pass out paper and pencils. Give everyone a silly prompt to draw and then see if people can guess correctly.

- Pass out pair items or picture cards and find your person to complete your pair. (Peanut butter & jelly)
- The sandwich making game. Write instructions for how to make a sandwich and then have the main leader/facilitator do exactly what the card says to see if it works.
- Share your favorite appropriate meme in the chat or with the group.
- Would you rather? Draw a line in the middle of the room and ask a few “would you rather” questions. Have people stand on the side they rather do and discuss why.

Concern (Bring up a concern)

- What are the qualifications for cutting a candidate?
- What is your current Probation Process and how does it empower your actives to come back and be more committed to being representatives of the organization
- Are there plans in place to help active members who fall behind in their schooling?
- Are you able to bring up concerns without fear of judgment?
- Do you trust the people you're in the organization with? If not, why?
- Do you feel comfortable going to the president or sponsor with a concern?

Collaboration (Brainstorm how to resolve and/or fix the concern.)

- What are goals that are attainable to alleviate these concerns (SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely)?
- How are you building positive relationships between members?
- What type of conflict resolution strategies are being used?

- What do the active members want out of the organization? Why are you here?
- How do the ideals of the organization hold up if a concern is resolved?
- If you could go back to your candidate semester and pass yourself one note, what would it say and why?
- Do we need outside help to solve the issue?
- Sing your organization's hymn or college fight song before or after the meeting.
- Play a song together on instruments, if time and resources allow.

Closing (Reflection of the circle process and/or closing quote/question/mindfulness activity)

- How do we walk away from the circle experience without holding any grudges, resentment, trauma, anxiety?
- Is there a need to reconvene the circle at a future date? For what reason or situation?
- Time afterwards to talk “off the record” and just connect to each other.
- Repeat something that resonated with you in the meeting, if it is something you can do physically how do you plan to work towards that?
- Write one flash card with a positive message for every member of the circle. At the end, collect your messages and have a feel good moment reading them.