

8

SESSION

**Creating, maintaining and
repairing social ties**



8.1 Introduction

This module looks at the role a JCS can play in helping a client identify elements of relationships that make them either negative or positive. Relationships are complex and will have elements of both, however it is important to recognize these indicators. After these indicators have been discussed, the JCS will be taught how to reframe conflict using a restorative justice approach. This process of reframing will then be applied to a role play scenario that will aid JCS' to act as mediators.

8.2 Learning outcomes

- To be able to define the key elements of positive relationships and negative relationships
- To be able to reframe past conflicts and to begin the healing process
- To be able to act as a mediator in addressing conflicts

8.3 Training session plan

DURATION

3,5 h

MATERIALS

- ATL Trainer Curriculum
- JCS Manual (it includes worksheets, case scenarios and self-assessment exercises)
- Worksheets and case scenario
- Stationery (paper in different sizes, cardboard, pens, pencils, markers, sticky notes, etc.)
- Flipchart/whiteboard
- Power Point presentations of the contents (optional)
- Computer (optional)
- Projector/TV (optional)

CONCEPTUAL CONTENTS

ATL Trainer Curriculum, Unit 7, Creating, maintaining and repairing social ties

JCS Manual, Unit 8, Creating, maintaining and repairing social ties

INTRODUCTION

This session will include a lot of discussion and sharing experiences. Therefore, it is important that everyone feels comfortable with the other participants, so that they can open up and express their ideas and opinions.

The session could start with everyone being in a circle, facing each other, and introducing themselves.

If the facilitator sees it fit, a brief icebreaker activity can be conducted so the participants get to know each other a bit more.

DURATION OF THE INTRODUCTION

10 min



ACTIVITY 1	Defining relationships
DURATION	20 min
WORKSHEET REFERENCE	JCS Manual, Unit 8, Worksheet 1 “Defining relationships”
PROCEDURE	<p>The goal for this activity is to generate a discussion about what positive and negative relationships comprise, and to reach a definition of these two concepts.</p> <p>It is key for this activity that the participants are allowed to engage in a discussion and express their interpretations of these concepts, either theoretically or based on experiences.</p> <p>It is a good idea to start by “brainstorming” ideas or characteristics that they associate to positive and negative relationships, and to write them down in post-its. This could be done by each participant individually, and then the post-its could be collected and read out loud anonymously.</p> <p>Using these brainstormed ideas as the basis, the participants will then proceed to engage in a discussion about these two concepts. After the discussion, the participants will have to agree on a final definition for the two concepts: a positive relationship and a negative relationship.</p> <p>The definitions developed by the participants will be carried forward to Activity 2 and will guide the rest of the session. For this purpose, it will be useful to write down the definitions on a board or paper so that they are visible throughout the session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is key that the activity allows the participants to identify aspects of positive and negative relationships. • Enable them to come up with their own definitions. <p>Potential questions to guide the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes a relationship positive? • What makes a relationship negative? • How does a negative/positive relationship make you feel? • Which are some “red flags” that can be used to easily identify a negative relationship? (e.g., excessive perfectionism, abuse or neglect, unpredictability and fear, conditional love, lack of boundaries, poor communication, etc.) • What do you need for a relationship to be “positive” for you? • What would draw you into engaging with a person in a negative or positive relationship?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which of your social, emotional, or physical resources are you putting into the relationship, and what do you get in return?
<p>ALTERNATIVES/TIPS</p>	<p>Some tips for this Activity are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a comfortable space where all the participants can feel safe, comfortable, and empowered to speak up during the session. The discussions might involve personal experiences, and thus the participants must feel heard and respected. • When brainstorming, allow the participants to choose a spot in the room that they prefer, where they could sit down and spend 5 minutes by themselves thinking about the concepts. Give them post-its so they can write down the ideas. Maybe playing some calm background music during those minutes would ease the tension and create an atmosphere for reflection. • After the minutes of self-reflection, collect the post-its and mix them (so they stay anonymous). Read what is written in the post-its out loud. • During the subsequent discussion, it would be a good idea to sit down in a circle, so all the participants are facing each other when speaking. • Write down the definitions they come up with in a board, so they are visible throughout the session.

<p>ACTIVITY 2</p>	<p>Reframing previous conflicts and building positive relationships</p>
<p>DURATION</p>	<p>40 min</p>
<p>WORKSHEET REFERENCE</p>	<p>JCS Manual, Unit 8, Worksheet 2 “Reframing previous conflict”</p>



PROCEDURE

In Restorative Justice, a critical aspect of addressing conflicts or negative relationships is reframing the core issues arising from such conflict/negative relationships. In a conflict, each party is focused on their own perception of the events and attribute the blame to whoever they see as the belligerent party.

This process of addressing the core issues attempts to give each person a more rounded view of what happened and seeks to encourage compassion and understanding.

This activity will mainly be based on a group discussion by the participants about a fictitious case scenario. The case scenario (Knife incident) can be found in Worksheet 2. Read the case scenario out loud (or ask a participant to read it), and then use the guiding questions for the subsequent discussion.

1. Instead of seeking to attribute blame, focus on how to address the wrongs committed

Questions to answer: What harm has been done? How can they process and accept the wrong that has been done?

2. Make the victims' experience central to the healing process

Questions: How has the perpetrator affected the victim? How can the victim make the perpetrator truly understand the impact of the harm they have done? How can they communicate this without laying blame, but increasing understanding?

3. Instead of seeking to punish the perpetrator, identify the causes of their behaviour and how they can fix it

Questions: What caused the perpetrator to act like this? Can I understand their motivations even if I disagree with them? What actions can we take to lessen the likelihood of this happening again?

(This is not about shifting blame from the perpetrator to the victim, but rather about finding compassion and understanding in those relationships that are worth maintaining. This compassion must be attempted by both perpetrator and victim. It is worth keeping in mind that both parties might have some extent of responsibility.)

Questions: What caused the perpetrator to act like this? Can I understand their motivations even if I disagree with them? What actions can we take to lessen the likelihood of this happening again?

(This is not about shifting blame from the perpetrator to the victim, but rather about finding compassion and understanding in those relationships that are worth maintaining. This compassion must be attempted by both perpetrator and victim. It is worth keeping in mind that both parties might have some extent of responsibility.)

4. Relinquish your focus on the past to focus on the future

Questions: Is this relationship worth maintaining? If I cannot control someone else's actions, what actions can I take to uphold my side of the relationship? If I am the one continually letting people down, what can I do to mitigate this?

5. Give the perpetrator a role in the healing process

Questions: How can we involve the perpetrator in the healing process? What activities and changes can they undertake to better their behaviour? What does the victim want from the perpetrator in order to heal?

6. If the relationship is to succeed there is no winner or loser, there is only the balance that is achieved by reconciliation

Questions: Can both parties come to an understanding where there is no fear of re-offending? How can the victim heal while the perpetrator grows as a person?

This is delivered alongside the participant's definitions and as such some relationships may be too damaging to attempt to fix. In this case, the JCS should work to breed understanding in the person they are helping even if that understanding only serves to influence their own healing and behavior in the future.

ALTERNATIVES/TIPS

For this activity and the discussion, ask the participants to sit in a circle so they are facing each other when they speak. Remind them that there is no right or wrong answer, and that they can express their ideas and their point of view on the case scenario.



<p>ACTIVITY 3</p>	<p>Mediation and growth</p>
<p>DURATION</p>	<p>1 h</p>
<p>WORKSHEET REFERENCE</p>	<p>JCS Manual, Unit 8, Worksheet 3, “Mediation and Growth”</p>
<p>PROCEDURE</p>	<p>At this stage of the session, the participants should have an idea of how to spot negative and positive relationships, as well as the conceptual basis under which the program must work. Therefore, now they can start practising acting as a mediator. This can be done in small groups with a minimum of three participants (victim, perpetrator, mediator). Ideally each person should have a turn at being a mediator.</p> <p>Based on the agreed definitions of positive and negative relationships, they will set up a short prompt of a scenario where two people or more just engaged in a conflict.</p> <p>The participants can also use some of the alternative examples of conflict scenarios set out in the worksheet. These prompts are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Intrafamilial theft 2. Bullying <p>After setting up/deciding on the prompt, the group will act out a scene where each party is focused on their own viewpoint and motivations.</p> <p>The participants with the role of a mediator will follow this process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen. Hear out both parties to understand the essence of the conflict – the conflicts may be complex and wide ranging. It is important to get each party to say their part. 2. Define key areas of conflict and dispute. Both participants are focused on their own side of the story and key disagreements must be highlighted. 3. Focus on resolution, not blame. Both parties may be guilty to some extent, or one party may be more to blame than the other. However, it is central to the Restorative Justice framework that emphasis is put on finding a resolution, rather than attributing blame or punishment. 4. Create options for agreement. Allow both parties to the conflict to propose solutions or commitments. Let each party suggest what they would need from the other party to move past this conflict.

PROCEDURE	<p>5. Draw up a physical agreement. Codify an agreement for how each party should proceed and what results you expect to see from these actions. Use the SMART system: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time specific goals. The agreement must be neutral and unbiased, focused on healing and not blame, the clearer the structure the better.</p> <p>After 45 mins of work in small groups, and once all the agreements have been written down, all the participants will gather in a circle and discuss how the activity went. Even though it is good to mention the resolutions each group achieved, the emphasis should be put on the process of mediation itself and what each party felt or learnt during such process (particularly the person acting as mediator).</p>
ALTERNATIVES/TIPS	<p>It is key for this session that the participants know there is no right or wrong answer to the conflict resolution. Most importantly, they should let their creativity flow.</p>

ACTIVITY 4	Case scenario analysis
DURATION	30 min
WORKSHEET REFERENCE	Story of Giuseppe
PROCEDURE	Read the case scenario to the group or ask one of the participants to read it aloud. Ask participants to respond collectively to the questions or do it in small groups. In this case, then, ask each group to share their conclusions.
CLOSURE OF THE SESSION	At the end of the session, ask reflection questions, such as: “How do you think today’s session brings you closer to becoming a peer supporter? Then invite participants to note what caught their attention, what they have learned and what they want to keep as a point of reference from today’s session, as well as to ask any related questions.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION	At the end of the session, ask reflection questions, such as: “How do you think today’s session brings you closer to becoming a peer supporter? Then invite participants to note what caught their attention, what they have learned and what they want to keep as a point of reference from today’s session, as well as to ask any related questions.
-------------------------------	--



8.4 Bibliography / Webliography

- B. Oudekerek, D. Blachman-Demner & C. Mulford. [Teen Dating Violence: How Peers Can Affect Risk and Protective Factors \(ojp.gov\)](#). National Institute of Justice. 2014
- Healing Justice. Restorative Justice and the Circle Process. (healingjusticeproject.org). 2019.
- Liebmann & Wootton. [Restorative Justice and Domestic Abuse/Violence](#). The Home Office Crime Reduction Unit for Wales. 2010
- Liebmann. Restorative Justice: How It Works. [ProQuest Ebook Central - Reader](#). 2007.
- Minnesota Department of Corrections. Facilitating Restorative Group Conferences. 2003.
- Novac, Hermer, Paradis & Kellen. [Justice and Injustice: Homelessness, Crime, and the Criminal Justice System - desLibris](#). Centre for Urban & Community Studies, University of Toronto. 2006.
- Safe In The City. [The successful use of restorative practice to repair harm in a supported accommodation project. Safe in the City](#). Brighton & Hove City Council. 2018.
- Shenk and Zehr. [Restorative Justice and Substance Abuse: The Path Ahead](#). SAGE journals. 2001.
- Weitekamp & Kerner. Restorative Justice: Theoretical foundations. ProQuest Ebook Central - Reader. 2011.

8

SESSION

worksheets and case scenario



Accommodating a travelling **life**



Worksheet 1 - Defining relationships

In this activity, you will explore what constitutes **positive relationships** and **negative relationships**.

Think about these questions:

- What makes a relationship positive?
- What makes a relationship negative?
- How does a negative/positive relationship make you feel?
- What do you need for a relationship to be “positive” for you?

Write down the key characteristics for each:

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS	NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Write down the final definition for **Positive relationship**

Write down the final definition for **Negative relationship**

Worksheet 2 – Reframing previous conflict

Please, read this case scenario and discuss it with the rest of the group. Use the following questions to guide the discussion.

CASE SCENARIO – Knife incident

INCIDENT INFORMATION

Derrick is a 30-year-old homeless man who recently brought a switchblade knife to the shelter where he sleeps at night and threatened another shelter resident (Taylor) with it. Taylor was extremely frightened, and he is now scared to come back to the shelter. The shelter staff decided to hold a conference with both residents to talk about the incident.

TAYLOR – Student threatened (Victim)

Taylor is also homeless, and he goes to the shelter to sleep every night. He is calm and everyone there seems to like him. Taylor has always disliked Derrick because he is impulsive, aggressive and always seems to be in trouble. The day before the knife incident, Taylor made fun of Derrick in front of other residents for acting so immaturely and being unable to control himself.

On the day of the incident, Derrick pulled up a switchblade knife in front of Taylor and told him: *“Make fun of me again and you will regret it”*. This incident made Taylor feel extremely scared and vulnerable. He is afraid to come back to the shelter since he doesn’t see it as a safe space anymore.



CASE SCENARIO – Knife incident

DERRICK – Person who did harm (Offender)

Derrick is a 30 year-old man who became homeless 2 years ago. He has been struggling to find accommodation and a stable job. His mental health has been severely affected because of this situation, and he knows that his behaviour has been altered by becoming more irritable and impulsive.

Derrick doesn't feel supported by the shelter staff, and he doesn't want them or the other residents to know about his struggles with mental health. Derrick felt really offended by Taylor's comments labelling him as immature, and he decided to bring the knife to the shelter to regain his respect. He never intended to actually hurt Taylor, but he wanted to scare him off. Derrick doesn't think the incident was such a big deal and is angry at the shelter staff for letting Taylor make fun of him in the first place.

Consider these questions when discussing the case scenario:

HARM COMMITTED:

- What harm has been done? How has the perpetrator affected the victim?
- How can the victim make the perpetrator truly understand the impact of the harm he has done?
- How can this be communicated without laying blame, but increasing understanding?

MOTIVATIONS:

- What caused the perpetrator to act like this?
- Can I understand their motivations even if I disagree with them?
- What are the different points of view of the conflict?

HEALING:

- How can they both process and accept the wrong that has been done?
- How can we involve the perpetrator in the healing process?
- What does the victim want from the perpetrator in order to heal?

RECONCILIATION:

- What do the victim and the offender need in order to reconcile?
- What commitments can the perpetrator and victim agree on, to ensure this doesn't happen again?
- What can the shelter management/staff do in order to help the reconciliation?

Worksheet 3 – Mediation and Growth

CASE SCENARIO 1 – Intrafamilial theft

INCIDENT INFORMATION

Sara, a 21-year-old girl, stole her stepmother’s credit card and used it to withdraw £200. By the time her stepmother (Michelle) discovered the theft, Sara had spent the money on drugs, which she consumed with her friends. Michelle was extremely upset, and when she confronted Sara about the theft, Sara yelled at her and even insulted her. Michelle was extremely angry about Sara’s behaviour, and the theft was the last incident she was willing to take after continued bad behaviour. She decided to call the police to report the theft and kicked Sara out of their home. At this point, Sara found herself sleeping rough on the streets. It was decided that a group conference would be held to deal with the incident.

MICHELLE – Step-mother (Victim)

Michelle is Sara’s stepmother. She married Sara’s father a year ago, and both Sara and her father moved to live with her in a different town. She knows that Sara has had difficulties adjusting to her new town and family dynamics, but she thinks that it is Sara’s responsibility to get used to the changes since she is old enough.

Sara is still extremely rude to Michelle and has verbally abused her on several occasions. Moreover, Sara’s drug consumption has significantly increased this past year. Even though Michelle and Sara’s father have tried to talk with her, she refuses to change her behaviour and habits. Michelle is concerned that the situation has gotten way out of hand, she is tired of Sara’s attitude and she feels that she deserves her respect. Michelle kicked Sara out of the home because she thinks that she has to start taking responsibility for her own life and decisions.

SARA – Step-daughter (Offender)

Sara is 21 years old. Her mother died 3 years ago, and her father re-married Michelle last year. She admits to stealing the credit card and spending all the money on drugs. She knows it was a bad thing to do, however, she’s still mad at Michelle for driving her father away from her previous family and for making her move to a different town.

Sara misses her old life and her mother. She was referred to a psychologist 2 months ago because she was diagnosed with depression. She blames Michelle for trying to replace her mother, and she feels that she is not doing anything to understand her and all the changes that she has brought to her life. Sara now finds herself sleeping on the streets or temporarily sleeping at her friends’ places. She doesn’t know how to get out of this situation.



CASE SCENARIO 2 – Fire incident

INCIDENT INFORMATION

Joseph is a 64 years-old man who is homeless and has been living in an abandoned trailer for some years. To cook, Joseph usually heats up food using alcohol in a can as a stove. The incident occurred one day when Joseph left the can unattended for some time and the flames spread causing a fire. Joseph tried to stop the flames from spreading outside the trailer, however, the heat burnt his arms. He then went to the main street to ask for help, and the fire department was called. The fire was extinguished on time, and there was no further damage to the nearby buildings. However, the neighbours got really scared because of the incident, and are afraid another fire might happen in the future.

COMMUNITY (Victim)

In this case, the community is represented by some neighbours who live close to the burnt trailer. The neighbours expressed that the incident made them feel very scared since they saw the fire approaching and were concerned for their safety.

They consider that Joseph should have been more careful and responsible for his actions since he put other lives at risk. Besides, they are also worried that another fire might occur since Joseph still uses the same cooking method.

The community is understanding of Joseph's situation and doesn't think he should be sent to prison; however they don't want a similar incident to happen again.

JOSEPH – Homeless man (Offender)

Joseph is an old man who has been homeless for 6 years. He had been living in the abandoned trailer for long enough to consider it his home. The fire incident caused him great emotional distress since he lost all his belongings and his home (the only space where he felt relatively safe). Moreover, he now feels more isolated and unwelcome in the community than ever before.

He feels responsible and guilty for having put his neighbour's lives at risk. He understands their concerns about preventing similar incidents in the future, however, he doesn't think that he could realistically change his cooking method. He has been using this method for years since he doesn't have the means to cook in a different way.

MADE-UP CASE SCENARIO

INCIDENT INFORMATION

VICTIM

OFFENDER



CASE SCENARIO – Story of Giuseppe

Giuseppe is a 40-year-old man, living in Finland. He was born in a small Italian village, where he lived until the age of 20, with his mother and four sisters. His father left the family when Giuseppe was 8 years old, to look for employment in Germany so that he could sustain his family. Despite the young age, Giuseppe, in a way, became the head of the family, burdened with responsibilities he was not prepared for. As a reaction, Giuseppe began to stand up to his mother, refusing to follow her rules. Aged sixteen, he dropped out of school, and did gig jobs here and there to help provide for the family.

After 10 years abroad, an occupational accident forced Giuseppe's father to return home. The failure of the father's project, the financial problems, and the difficulties in setting up a new balance in the family's relationships worsened the already fragile emotional climate of the family and led to an unsustainable series of acts of domestic violence. Giuseppe decided to leave the family and his country to look for new opportunities abroad. He resolved to cut off all contacts with his family.

He travelled to England, where he worked as a waiter. His life became more regular and satisfying. Eventually, the owner of the restaurant- who appreciated Giuseppe's dedication and attitude towards the clients- decided to invest in his professional growth by training him as a chef. For the very first time in his life, Giuseppe felt valued and this encouraged him to do his very best. He, in fact, became a locally appreciated chef and, when he turned 30, he decided to open his own restaurant.

It is in this period that Giuseppe met Freia, a young Finnish woman that, shortly after, became his spouse. A year after, Freia gave birth to their first son and suffered from postpartum depression. She started abusing alcohol. Shortly after, she asked Giuseppe to move to Finland, to be closer to her family. Giuseppe agreed, hoping that their situation would improve with the help of Freia's family.

However, Freia's addiction didn't stop once in Finland, and the couple started to fight very often, among other reasons, because of Giuseppe's difficulties in finding a new job. After a few months, the couple entered a deep crisis that led to divorce. Giuseppe had to leave the apartment and, once more, his family. For a short period, he stayed with some acquaintances, while looking for a new apartment. He missed his son very much. He became depressed and started drinking. His fixed-term contract at a restaurant wasn't renewed and he struggled to find new employment.

Giuseppe's circle of friends changed with the use of alcohol. He moved in with his new acquaintances. Soon, he ran out of savings and lacked the means to pay the rent for his room. He started to behave as he did when he was younger, back in his village, rebelling against the rules, and committing minor crimes to get money; he was caught by the police and got a criminal record.

Eventually, he got into a fight and stabbed a man which led to him going to prison. During his imprisonment, the social worker tried to help Giuseppe find an apartment, a first step before trying to rebuild the relationship with his son and, maybe, in the future, getting shared custody of his son, under the surveillance of the social assistance system.

However, the prison sentence was so short that there wasn't enough time to find an apartment and, once released from prison, Giuseppe ended up in the street and fell into deep substance abuse.

The health system together with the social system helped Giuseppe enter rehab and get sober. After his rehabilitation, he started a cohabitation in an apartment with other men who had experienced homelessness. The situation at the apartment was restless and Giuseppe's belongings were constantly stolen; he started to drink again and returned to the street.

Questions for reflection

1. Which services or key person should be put in place in the consecutive interventions to help Giuseppe?
2. What may be the barriers in the person/s trying to support Giuseppe?
3. What kind of help is needed on behalf of these professionals?
4. Which could be your role as peer support agent? How peer support could help?
5. Giuseppe's recent trauma can be linked to the breakdown in his relationship with his new family. What can be done to achieve mutual healing for both Giuseppe and them?



Accommodating a travelling **life**

8

end of session

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

