

History & Operational Values of Teaching Peace by Beverly B. Title, Ph.D., March 24, 2009

The Very Beginning & the Mission . . .

Teaching Peace was founded November 30, 1994 by Lana Leonard and me with the mission: To cultivate attitudes, skills and opportunities for living peacefully with self, others and the earth. It was founded for the primary purpose of violence prevention, but consciously named in the affirmative to reflect "what we're about, not what we're against." At the 2004 Annual Meeting the Teaching Peace executive board amended the last word of the mission statement from "earth" to "world," to reflect a concern for all persons in the world leaving peacefully together. This change was in response to the "war on terrorism" messages of post 9/11.

Our Early Work, & the Beginning of Restorative Justice in Longmont . . .

The first work of the organization focused on bullying & school violence prevention and multicultural storytelling, reflecting the expertise of the founders. In the first years, I was traveling to communities throughout the country, training and consulting to facilitate implementation of state of the arts, violence prevention programming in schools and communities. In 1995 Lana and I became concerned that we were expending our energy with this national effort and neglecting our own community. At that time we determined to commit 50% of Teaching Peace's work to our own community. Shortly thereafter, we decided to ask several key stakeholders to partner with us in bringing restorative justice to Longmont. We asked the police chief, the local school superintendent, the municipal judge and chief probation officer, and the head of a nonprofit that operated a school for students who were expelled from the SVVSD. All agreed to participate and the Longmont Community Justice Partnership (LCJP) was formed. Over the ensuing years, LCJP became the primary work of Teaching Peace accounting for closer to 90% of its work as we became engaged with this exciting new work. It is important to acknowledge the importance of several of those early partners & volunteers for without their engagement, Teaching Peace would not be what it is today. I want to honor the contributions of Lana Leonard, Mike Butler, Jack Hay, Thom Allena, Mark Seidler, Al Weinberg, Meir Carasso, Richard Greene, Carol (Will) Nickel, Kathee Jones, Anne Rogers, Sara McCracken, Katie Witt, Bea Ramos, Meg Wolfer to name only a few, & Gary Frantz, who bravely facilitated our very first case. I offer this document humbly and with apology to those unnamed many whose contributions are omitted as victims of a desire for brevity and my incomplete memory.

A Little More About Lana. . .

Everyone should be so blessed in life as to have a Lana on your shoulder. She has a special kind of tunnel vision that masks out everything that isn't positive and supportive. Lana instantly sees the good in people and situations and goes on, sometimes at length, to make sure that you see it, too. When Lana and I met we quickly began to see the similarities in our lives, the most dramatic being that we were born within hours of each other, she on October 14, 1945 and I on October 15, 1945. I have accused her of pulling me into this life so we could do this work together. Lana once told me that she thought the highest good she could do was to support me

fully in creating Teaching Peace. I do believe it was a partnership crafted on another plane and Lana is one of the great gifts of my life. Her inherent cheerfulness, brilliant mind and impeccable taste contributed much more than she knows. She was the first to give me credit for things and generally deferred to me, but I don't believe any of it would have happened without her constant support, encouragement and contributions. And Lana brought a touch of class to everything we did. She was famous for white linens with fresh cut flower, apple juice and ginger snaps. Her lovely farm in Hygiene hosted many volunteer dinners and picnics and provided the perfect serene backdrop for writing our books.

Health issues and retirement moved her and husband, Tracy, to Sedona, Arizona where she couldn't let restorative justice sit still. With her usual tenacity, she succeeded in creating the Sedona-Oak Creek Restorative Justice program (SORJ). She is now working part-time and enjoying life with her family and her new dog bud, Maggie.

Indigenous Roots of Restorative Practices. . .

It is imperative to honor the indigenous beginnings of our practice of restorative justice. Restorative practices come to us from a time when the survival of the tribe depended on all members contributing to the well being of the whole, a time when no one was considered disposable. When conflict or wrongdoing occurred, mechanisms were needed for bringing people back into right relationship. Their ancient wisdom is being adapted to modern times throughout the world as restorative justice has become a worldwide movement. It is being adapted in many different institutions, for example, when used in schools it may be referred to as restorative discipline. A restorative model, family group decision-making, is being used in social services to inform child welfare decisions. When used to resolve issues of crime, it is called Restorative Justice. To refer to the collective of all these restorative processes and many more, we use the umbrella term, restorative practices. The restorative practices that we use in Longmont are derivative of the Maori of New Zealand. I thank them and all the many indigenous people who, despite cruel treatment in the past, are helping us find our way through the troubles of today's times.

Teaching Peace, the Organizational Structure. . .

When Teaching Peace was founded, Lana and I were referred to Peter Guthrie who was purported to be the leading nonprofit attorney in Denver. We split the cost 50-50 from our personal savings to retain his services to create the By-laws and Articles of Incorporation and to submit all applications to secure the 501(c)3 non profit status that was accomplished in 1994.

We were full of passion and purpose and confident of our ability to get this show on the road as swiftly and efficiently as possible. We determined at that time, with Peter Guthrie's advice, that the simplest board structure would be the best. When Teaching Peace was incorporated, we wanted a board structure that would allow for ease of operation. We were advised by Guthrie that we could create a board with only the two of us if we had an outside, elected entity that established salaries. Because of my history of 21 years with the St. Vrain Valley School District (SVVSD), that board was selected. This meant that we could never receive a salary in excess of what we would be paid as teachers in the SVVSD. From the beginning, Lana and I performed

our duties under the specifications of the SVVSD Teacher's Contract, regarding pay and days of service, though there were rarely, if ever, sufficient funds to meet the teacher's pay scale.

Teaching Peace also extended this selection operationally to include organizational policies. Teaching Peace may establish their own policies, but in absence of such, we defer to the SVVSD operational and personnel policies. This served well until the point that there were personnel working in a donated office in the Safety and Justice Building where their "fellow workers" were city employees. At that point we began working under the City of Longmont holiday calendar, so these employees would have the same days off as other building employees.

Having served on many nonprofit Boards of Directors, I was hopeful that the choice of the Teaching Peace Board would eliminate many of the difficulties I had experienced, specifically contentious board meetings, executive directors who spent much of their time "managing" the board, constantly recruiting and orienting new board members, and liability for illegal executive activity, to name a few. I felt confident that we could take care of the fundraising and find other ways to get the insight and advice needed to make good policy decisions. We decided we would take full responsibility for fundraising and we would get the additional insight and support needed by having an Advisory Board for each program that Teaching Peace developed. At that time we had our dreams and visions for Teaching Peace, but we weren't entirely sure what it would become.

How Restorative Justice Found Its Home in Longmont. . .

The first time I ever heard the term "restorative justice," it was from Thom Allena. A group of youth-serving agency heads and I were at a meeting in Denver where Janet Reno, then U.S. Attorney General, was the keynote speaker. At a break, a man came over to our group and introduced himself. He said he was a consultant working in restorative justice. I said that I had no idea what that was, but I was sure it was deeply important, and I took out my note pad and wrote the words, "restorative justice."

A couple years later, Lana and I were at a youth violence prevention conference in Denver that was put on by the School Mediation Center. We had purchased half a table (we couldn't afford a whole table) to show, and hopefully sell, our new book *Victim or Hero: Writing Your Own Life Story*, a sentence completion and personal story-writing guide for youth. At the other half of the table were Ted and Susan Wachtel from a company called Real Justice. They had been working with the Loveland Police Department on a restorative justice project and were presenting a session. I was interested and attended the session and immediately recognized the wisdom of this approach. It was like a loud bell was ringing, and I clearly heard the *satyagraha*, the truth force Gandhi talked about. I kept thinking about this throughout the conference, like a song that gets lodged in the front of your brain that you just can't turn off. Restorative justice is a perfect fit for Longmont, the tune kept repeating. My very first thought of an application was that this could be the answer to our growing problem with school expulsion. Throughout my work with the school district for the previous eight years, I had been building community partnerships primarily focused on youth empowerment and violence prevention, and this felt like exactly what

was needed. On the way home from the conference I said to Lana, I *have* to do this (restorative justice); are you in? She immediately gave an affirmative reply.

Before attending the conference I had gotten a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a grant from the Governor's Partnership Office in Denver. I hadn't intended to write for it, but the RFP was still on my desk. As soon as I got home I looked at it and saw proposals were due in three days. Before sleeping that night, I wrote a one-page document that briefly told what restorative justice is, why I thought it was a good fit for Longmont, and what a local partnership might look like. I emailed it to the Mike Butler, Police Chief, Greg Wagner, Senior Municipal Probation Officer, Jack Hay, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, and Tom Loftus the executive director of our school for expelled students. I included a cover letter that said I was writing a grant to bring restorative justice to Longmont and suggested this project would best go forward as a partnership. I asked them to join me in creating this project and writing a letter of support for the grant. I said I would call them first thing in the morning. I did and all agreed to have letters of support prepared and ready by the next morning. I wrote the grant; Lana picked up the letters, and we drove the packets to Denver. And. . . we got the grant!

Though this was a critical event in our history, it was a pretty small grant, and it soon became evident that more substantial support would be required to build the program infrastructure that was needed. Mike Butler, Longmont's police chief, invited me to speak to the CEO's of Law Enforcement of Boulder County. They agreed to endorse a Byrne Grant from the Department of Criminal Justice with the request that, if the pilot project proved successful, they wanted to replicate it in their communities, with the exception of Louisville. The City of Longmont committed the required 20% match for the grant and made a commitment to continue to support the program after the grant sunset. That later came to pass and the Longmont Community Justice Partnership (LCJP) model was later implemented, with appropriate adaptations, in the Boulder County Sheriff's Office, Boulder County Probation, Fairview and Boulder High Schools, and the Lafayette Police Department. Around the same time restorative programs were started in the Erie Police Department, who received their training from another organization, and at the University of Colorado where several LCJP trainers and I consulted in the initial program development. A former LCJP facilitator, Will Bledsoe, played a pivotal early leadership role in establishing the C. U. program that has further flourished under the capable leadership of Gina Bata to become a national model at the university level.

When the statewide restorative justice organization, the Forum on Community Restorative Justice, was active, LCJP had a contract to provide much of the training in the state and the LCJP model became known in the national RJ movement as the Colorado model. Our model differed from others in that we introduced Community as an entity in the circle. Most models at that time included victims with their support group, offenders with their support group and one or two facilitators. We expanded the circle to include representatives of the community in an effort to bring that essential component of the community voice that is always present in indigenous circles.

Funding. . .

The major financial support for Teaching Peace has come from the City of Longmont. Through the terms of three mayors, numerous councilpersons, and economic down turns, the financial

support for restorative justice as survived. This has been due to two primary reasons, the unwavering support of Chief Mike Butler and the consistent, positive outcomes that have been faithfully documented and independently analyzed and reported by the National Research Center of Boulder.

In addition to funding from the city, Teaching Peace has gotten grants from the Division of Criminal Justice, Youth Crime Prevention Initiative (an earlier iteration of Tony Grampsas that came from the Governor's Office), Tony Grampsas Youth Services Grant, the Community Foundation of Boulder County, the Longmont Community Foundation, Boulder County Victims Assistance, the Burgundy Foundation, and two small family foundations. We also received revenue from trainings, books and other materials as well as private donations. Lana and I wrote *Civility Rules*, a violence prevention resource and activity guide for schools that uses restorative justice as a response when intervention is needed. We, and Mark Seidler, also wrote a restorative justice program implementation guide that details the LCJP model called *Restorative Justice in Action* to assist communities that wanted to start their own restorative justice program. We were far better at development than we were at marketing and these products only produced a fraction of their potential financial return.

Leadership Support from Advisory Boards. . .

The idea for the leadership structure of our Teaching Peace executive board was alternative enough to appeal to Lana and me, and, indeed, it seemed to work extremely well for quite a long time. When the decision was made to have a lean executive board that was working on a day-to-day basis in the organization, it was also decided that an advisory board would be created to oversee any programs being initiated.

When the Longmont Community Justice Partnership (LCJP) was formed in 1996, each of the partner agencies was asked to provide a member for the Advisory Board. They were told at that time that their capacity was advisory in nature, and they would only be asked to attend quarterly meetings. The first Advisory Board was for Longmont Community Justice Partnership (LCJP), and we found their support and advice invaluable as this board helped guide us to early success. In 2004, this board became split between those who wanted occasional oversight and involvement and those who wanted to be more deeply involved. At the suggestion of one of the members, a subset of the LCJP Advisory Board determined to meet monthly and take on a stronger leadership role in advancing restorative justice, and it became the primary advisory group for our restorative justice services. LCJP had reached a plateau, and it was believed that stronger board involvement was needed. This group was called the Working Board to reflect the increased commitment of those members of the Advisory Board who elected to step up in this way. The full Advisory Board moved to biannual meetings to review and reflect on the program's progress, and, after a couple of years, this board fell away leaving the Working Board in its place.

In 2004 another advisory board was formed to consider the use of restorative justice practices in cases of domestic violence. More is said about the work of this group in a subsequent section on Teaching Peace and domestic violence. The Restorative Alternative to Expulsion (RATE) advisory board was created in 2008 to provide support and guidance to this new pilot project.

And the Teaching Peace Board Grew . . .

In 2001, Jennifer Brown agreed to join the Teaching Peace Board. Since July of 1998 Jennifer had been doing the financial record keeping and payroll for Teaching Peace, and we felt it would be best if she officially served in the office of Treasurer as she was the person most involved with our financial operations. In October of 2001 Lana moved to Sedona, Arizona; though she moved away, she remained on the Board, attended annual meetings and consulted by telephone on an ongoing basis. In 2008 Lana officially resigned from the Teaching Peace Board. (By the way, Lana went forward to create the Sedona Oak Creek Restorative Justice Program in her new community!) In 2003 Summer Deaton took on a board role in Teaching Peace and was elected as board president the following year. She worked closely with Pattie Moreno who was LCJP Administrative Assistant from September 1999 to September 2006.

A Leader In the Field. . .

The early success of LCJP was recognized in Colorado, the United States, and internationally. The 2002 International Journal, *Contemporary Justice Review*, published an article entitled, "The Longmont Community Justice Partnership: Restorative Justice Practice as Collaboration," that was coauthored by Mark Seidler, Meir Carasso, and me. It brought recognition that resulted in our being selected for inclusion in a national study of restorative justice programs that was conducted by Drs. Gordon Bazemore and Mara Schiff of Florida Atlantic University. We were invited to present at three international conferences and took staff and volunteers to Velhoven, the Netherlands; Vancouver, Canada; and Boca Raton, Florida. Lana received the 9 Who Cares Award (NBC) for her contributions, and I was honored in 2001 with the Virginia Mackey Leadership Award that was given by the Colorado Forum on Community Restorative Justice. In 2002 LCJP received an honorable mention for Cooperative Service Delivery in the Local Government Innovations Award given by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG.) In 2005 Chief Mike Butler was given the Virginia Mackey Leadership Award for his many contributions to restorative justice.

In 2007 the Colorado legislature passed a bill to encourage the use of restorative justice and, to that end, created a state coordinating council with designated, appointed roles. In December 2007, I was appointed to that Council. The appointment letter from Peter A. Weir, Executive Director of Colorado Department of Public Safety states, "Because of your commitment to restorative justice principles and practices as evidenced by the extensive restorative justice programming available in the Longmont community. . .In addition, I believe that your service as a Co-Chair with the Colorado Coalition of Restorative Justice Directors (CCRJD) will provide further opportunities for advocating for and supporting RJ principles throughout the juvenile justice system in Colorado."

The Training Collaboration & Other Coalitions . . .

Throughout our existence, Teaching Peace has considered building partnerships as the way to do business and best serve our community. It is worth mentioning that Frank Campanella-Green, who later became a LCJP advisory board member, was a major influence in that direction. I

credit Frank with first helping me see the significance of partnership as a valuable approach when he was organizing our community to create the Intervention Specialists Program through Boulder County Public Health.

An excellent example of this partnership value in Teaching Peace's history is found in the *Restorative Justice Training Collaboration (TC)*. In about 2001 it became apparent that all of the RJ programs in the area were doing trainings for their own volunteers and that was not the most efficient way. We invited other RJ program leaders in the area to hear about a new idea. We proposed a cooperative training approach where we could pool our training dollars and all volunteers could participate in all trainings at no additional cost. We would offer a yearlong calendar that included basic conference facilitation and advanced circle facilitation trainings twice a year with monthly Hot Topics, two-hour sessions of relevance to our volunteers' skill development. All agreed to the concept, and Summer Deaton headed up what came to be the Training Collaboration. Summer's excellent leadership of this group was widely recognized by the partners and a major contributing factor to its long-term success.

After Summer's resignation from Teaching Peace in 2008, the leadership of this group became vested in a team with representatives from several local RJ programs. It is a very active group that is responsive to training needs as they develop. For example, a subcommittee of the TC was formed to focus on RJ in schools that resulted in additional, school-focused trainings being added to the offerings. The Training Collaboration has enjoyed enormous success on many levels and has grown to the point of becoming a very valuable asset to the local RJ community.

In a similar way but much earlier in time, Teaching Peace called a meeting of all the local RJ programs to consider how we might best work cooperatively to forward restorative justice. This group determined to continue meeting and has existed in some form or another since 1997 and is known as the Boulder Area Restorative Justice Coalition. At this point it is primarily a networking group that holds a breakfast meeting quarterly at a restaurant in Boulder. This has become a good mechanism for all the RJ programs and others with compatible interests to gather and has been known to spring into action on short notice when inspired and is one of the birthplaces of the statewide Colorado Coalition of Restorative Justice Directors under the leadership of Anne Rogers.

Peacemaking at Skyline High School. . .

Any story of Teaching Peace would be remiss not to honor the contribution of Pattie Moreno. Pattie came to Teaching Peace in 1999 as a bilingual administrative assistant working in the LCJP office and left seven years later to take a position with the City of Longmont's Children, Youth and Families' Gang Response & Intervention Program (GRIP). She was instrumental in enlisting the support of the local Latino community for restorative justice. One of the most noteworthy of Pattie's accomplishments were the Peacemaking Circles she conducted in partnership with Intervention Specialist Kim Miller in 2001-2002 at Skyline High School. Pattie and Kim spent countless hours in circles with two opposing groups of gang-involved Latinas using a talking circle process to help these young women process their current realities and explore their future potentials. The circles resulted in a significant decreases in violent episodes, in suspension rates, and unprecedented graduation rates for this demographic group. Our

gratitude and good wishes follow Pattie as she continues her good work for challenged youth in our community with GRIP.

Restorative Decision-Making. . .

From a number of years, Teaching Peace had a contract with the City of Longmont Municipal Court to offer a class in English and Spanish for adults and Spanish-speaking youth who were court-ordered to attend. It was a basic decision making class that included a restorative component where participants were asked to consider the harm of their action and determine what they might do to repair that harm. It was held on a Saturday morning and most folks arrived with a less than positive attitude and many other preferred Saturday activities on their minds. The instructors were often delighted by participants who asked, at the end of the session, if they could come back next Saturday. The instructors attributed this to participants feeling they had really been heard and respected. This contract was terminated due to cuts in the Municipal Court budget in 2007.

ReThinking Drinking. . .

In 2003 an organization from Des Moines, Iowa, Employee Family Resources (EFR), approached Teaching Peace to partner in developing a restorative justice approach for underage alcohol offenses. This project, named *ReThinking Drinking*, was undertaken primarily by Summer Deaton and me working with Tammy Hoyman, Paul Hedquist and Margy Altmix. It resulted in a fine piece of work, published in 2005, that basically took the Shoplifting Solutions Workshop model and applied alcohol abuse prevention content. EFR and TP are 50-50 partners in the ownership of this program. It is being used with great success in Des Moines and neighboring towns, but Teaching Peace has not yet managed the resources to implement it. We held a few exploratory meetings with Frank Campanella-Green, Beverly Alexander, Mike Butler, Judge Linda Cook, Summer Deaton and me, but we weren't able at that time to secure funding for its implementation. After the development phase EFR undertook a major new project and underwent an executive director succession that left them unable to manage the marketing phase of the project, and Teaching Peace had no resources to devote to that either. With some limited exposure from a conference presentation done jointly by District Attorney Fred Gay and Tammy Hoyman of Des Moines along with Summer Deaton, it was adopted in Sedona, AZ and Lone Tree, CO with Tammy and me providing the training. EFR continues to fully implement this highly successful program in the greater Des Moines area.

Domestic Violence. . .

In 2004, Teaching Peace began to explore the possibility of using restorative justice in cases of domestic violence. An advisory board was created to direct the exploration of this application of restorative justice for our community. Elise Flesher, Ph.D., was commissioned to do a literature review on the topic. In May 2005, Teaching Peace published her report entitled *The Use of Restorative Justice Principles in Cases of Domestic Violence*. A community summit was held September 8, 2005, *Domestic Violence and Restorative Justice: Unraveling the Possibilities*. Mark Umbreit and Tony Martens spoke at the summit and both offered positive encouragement for exploring the applications further. As a follow up to the summit, a development group was

formed with members from the Safe Shelter of the St. Vrain Valley, Longmont Ending Violence Initiative (LEVI), Longmont Police Department, and Teaching Peace. This group cooperatively developed an approach aimed at supporting D.V. victims who had left abusive relationships and wished to rebuild a circle of support with friends and family. A curriculum, *Building Circles of Support*, (BCS) was developed, and demonstrated to the professional community, but it was never implemented due to inability to acquire grant funding for the project. In 2003 Deb Witzel joined our staff as Conference Coordinator for LCJP, and she distinguished herself in that role as well as in her extensive involvement of BCS where she showed commitment, dedication, understanding and leadership.

A Home for Teaching Peace. . .

LCJP had operated from donated office space at the Safety and Justice Building since its beginning; however, Teaching Peace was managed from home and car offices until 2006. In January that year, Teaching Peace began renting the facility at 333 Terry Street. This lovely Victorian house quickly became home to Teaching Peace offices upstairs, and the downstairs rooms provided a library/meeting room, a kitchen, and two larger rooms for team meetings, trainings, and circles. The atmosphere provides the perfect setting for our work.

Teaching Peace Goes International. . .

2004 brought an exciting opportunity when I was invited as a guest of the U.S. Embassy to Chile to speak about restorative justice and LCJP at a judicial reform conference. Representatives from most countries in South America were in attendance and this session was very well received. One of our LCJP volunteers from Argentina, Laura Guida, translated my power point into Spanish for the visual presentation. The oral presentation was done in English with U.N. style headset translation available. Many countries in South America were undergoing huge judicial reforms to update their justice systems that lacked divorce law, environmental law, and such, and there was also curiosity about alternative solutions. Due to the high level of interest and positive reception for restorative justice, I was invited to speak at another such conference in Peru in 2006. I was also invited back to Chile in 2005 to work with the Minister of Education's Taskforce on School Violence Prevention because of my background in restorative justice and bullying prevention. In 2007 we had a visit from Lohengri Ascencio, an attorney working with the indigenous mapuche people of southern Chile. We were also visited by a Russian delegation that came to Longmont to explore innovations. It is wonderful to consider how our work here in Longmont has such far reaching affect.

Healing Circle for Our Community. . .

In April 2006 our community was rocked by a particularly frightening gang homicide. Because it occurred in broad daylight, in a neighborhood, in the middle of the street directly in front of a daycare center, with Latinos, and with the harsh reality of a sword in the chest, it had a large impact on many people. Some families were so traumatized that they prohibited their children from playing in their own yards.

Hearing these stories, Teaching Peace mobilized. In collaboration with City of Longmont's Children, Youth and Families, we held an evening of Healing Circles in English and Spanish. Adults and youth attended and LCJP facilitators provided a safe place for community members, Latino and Anglo, to come and share their stories of pain and sadness. These circles ended with participants sharing ideas of what they intended to do to help mend the harm. It as a single event, held at the Longmont Senior Center, that helped our community heal. I recall a youth who left asking if she could come back for another circle.

Change Can Be a Good Thing. . .

By 2007 it became clear that the organization had grown to the point that changes in board structure were needed. The Denver Foundation was the first funder to reject our application, because Teaching Peace was not governed by an independent board of directors. Nonprofit laws were changing, and it was imperative for the sustainability of the organization that significant restructuring needed to take place. Furthermore, I had become exhausted by the double duty of serving on the board and being the executive director. As I write this document, I am staggered by the magnitude of serving in the roles as executive board and executive director for 14 years with all that was happening.

In the last half of 2007 and the first half of 2008, the Teaching Peace Board began to work toward Deb Witzel succeeding me as executive director and creating a more traditional, independent, nonprofit board structure that did not include staff members. Teaching Peace had been led by its founders long enough, and the best hope for its long term sustainability is to move forward with a new board structure and fresh executive leadership. In 2008 Teaching Peace contracted with Martha Vail of JVA in Denver to facilitate an organizational restructuring process including founder succession planning. The intention was to have an independent board and create a stronger organizational infrastructure.

In 2008 Deb asked her attorney friend to review our By Laws and Articles of Incorporation. He did so and made suggestion of a few minor changes the current board could approve to move us along this path. He recommended consulting with the man he purported to be the best nonprofit attorney in the Denver area, Peter Guthrie. I contacted Peter and Deb and I met with him to determine what changes had occurred in nonprofit law since Teaching Peace was incorporated and what changes we would need to make to bring the organization into compliance. He confirmed that there was nothing illegal or unethical about the board structure under which Teaching Peace was operating. Even with changes in nonprofit law, the Teaching Peace structure was still sound. Regardless of that, Deb felt she needed a more traditional nonprofit board structure to support her leadership in moving the organization forward. I was in complete agreement that this change appeared to be a much better future path for the organization, and I wanted to do everything possible to support her future success.

I am dedicated to assisting the leadership of Teaching Peace in an advisory capacity as that may best serve. I remain on the staff of Teaching Peace as Director of Restorative Justice in Schools on a part-time basis and eagerly move more deeply into the work of restorative justice and away from the day-to-day tasks of running the organization. I want to continue to use my expertise and talent to further this good work.

John Kennedy said, "The definition of happiness. . .the full use of your powers along lines of excellence." I can count a number of achievements I'm proud to have been a part of in my professional life; however, I believe that Teaching Peace is the highest expression in my life of Kennedy's definition of happiness, and I feel deeply privileged to have been so fully empowered.

Restorative Alternative to Expulsion (RATE). . .

As a restorative response to school expulsion was in my very first vision of restorative justice in Longmont, it feels like the RATE program is just coming full circle for me. I had several meetings over the years with Don Haddad, Teaching Peace board member and superintendent-elect of the St. Vrain Valley School District, to discuss how to bring restorative practices into our schools. At one point he appointed a taskforce for that purpose and, despite some good efforts, it never found its way. In 2008, Don announced at a board meeting that he wanted to try using restorative justice with cases of non-mandatory expulsion. With combined financial contributions from the district and grant funds secured by K.G. Campanella-Green and other grant sources, Restorative Alternative to Expulsion (RATE) began in the fall of 2008. It was my great fortune to head up this project and to have Angie Lederach as a bilingual project assistant. Another Advisory Board was recruited to guide this project with representatives from the school district, the police, city youth & family services, the intervention program and community non profits. We have now conducted 4 restorative circles in lieu of expulsion. One student was subsequently expelled, and the other 3 are working toward contract completion. As with all partnerships, there are challenges to be worked out, but it is clear that RATE has been a lifeline for the students and families we have touched so far.

Guiding Values. . .

It seems important that some of the guidance that served the development of this organization be passed along. The rest of this document is an attempt to capture as much of that as I can.

Our Restorative Justice Facilitators. . .

Much like Advisory Boards have been relied upon to provide guidance for specific programs, the volunteer team of restorative justice facilitators, usually referred to as "the team," was relied upon to provide the expertise around our service delivery. We were most fortunate in the early days of LCJP to attract a lot of folks with outstanding wisdom, credentials, and experience. Our ranks were filled with Ph.D.'s, national training & restorative justice consultants, leaders in victims advocacy, entrepreneurs, police officers, community activists, educators, therapists, and women who worked in hardware stores, I'm not sure what the hardware thing was about, but they sure were capable people. We were rich in volunteer resources, and they came to Longmont from all over the area for, as one person put it, "you are the only game in town, the mother ship." Because LCJP was the first of the new RJ programs in the area, it attracted many forward-thinking, community-minded, good-hearted folks. I once said that heading up that team felt like I had the reins on a team of stallions, and it took all my strength and focus to keep us all headed in the same direction.

Restorative Justice was a very hot topic at the time and these people gave enormous amounts of their time to develop and refine this new practice. We wrote and rewrote scripts, ran circle and debriefed cases, met with policemen and other criminal justice folks, presented and trained, prebriefed and pre-conferenced cases, wrote and rewrote some more, and struggled to find the language that felt right for what we were doing and didn't make the police officers crazy which proved to be no small task. In an effort to not negatively label our youth as "offenders," at one point we spoke of them as "persons of concern." That got a swift and powerful, negative reaction from the police officers, and I recall one heated meeting to discuss this matter! This challenge was another example that ultimately strengthened a wonderful partnership by working it through. During this era, one of our members, Meir Carasso, devoted a great deal of time to write a lexicon of restorative justice terms, and LCJP stepped out as a leader in the national restorative justice movement.

Value for Partnership. . .

Teaching Peace has a bias for the partnership model. We have preferred to establish any major project as a partnership with other organizations that are naturally aligned with the purpose/mission of that project. Though partnerships can be messy and require time and energy to build and sustain, they more often result in programs that are better designed and are more sustainable. The wisdom of a variety of perspectives and investment from various areas generally results in stronger programs.

Political Neutrality. . .

Teaching Peace has always operated on a policy of political neutrality. We see ourselves as the Switzerland of the nonprofit world. Generally, we do not take stands on political issues, endorse candidates, or ballot issues. There have been a few exceptions, the Worthy Cause Initiative and other such local ballot issues that support the work of nonprofits and endorsement of the bipartisan initiative to create a U.S. Department of Peace, which is profoundly connected to our mission.

Our Organizational Culture & Expectations. . .

Teaching Peace operates with a strong organizational commitment to and value for our volunteers. How that shows up: enthusiastic recruitment, excellent training, superior support, and consistent consultation and appreciation. Our staff is here to serve our volunteers so that they may provide exceptional service to our clients. We support volunteer requests every way we can. We also expect our volunteers to be professional and personable in their work with restorative justice participants. Volunteers are the heart of our organization. It is the collective intelligence of our volunteers that holds the highest wisdom regarding our restorative practices, and they are seen as the experts in determining how we can best practice restorative justice. That is not intended to negate the contributions of our staff; however, the best decisions regarding program content and delivery should *always* be a product of consensus among staff and volunteers. It would be dangerous for staff to feel their knowledge is superior to the collective of

our volunteers' wisdom. We have occasionally had a volunteer who is an outlier, someone whose opinion differs from the generally held perspective. It is very important that the aberrant opinion be considered, but it is the *collective* wisdom that should prevail.

Teaching Peace operates with a strong organizational commitment to and value for our employees. How that shows up: health & retirement benefits; few personnel policies to allow for as many individual decisions as possible; lowest level of supervision needed for employees to be valued for their expertise and capacities, a high degree of cooperative decision making based on staff consensus, and an open door leadership policy. Teaching Peace also makes behavioral requests of all staff to support a positive organizational culture.

The following are the culture requests that I have made an effort to model and to hold up for our organization.

1. Commit to Quality Work
 - a. Always do your best.
 - b. If you don't know how to do something, ask for help. Don't fake it.
 - c. Be willing to say you don't know and get back to the person with an answer after checking further.
2. Be Accessible
 - a. Make every effort to keep the LCJP office open during the workday.
 - b. Whenever possible, staff should schedule lunch times, meetings, and vacations so that someone is able to be in the office at all times.
 - c. Whenever possible, phones are answered by a friendly person who can help or take a message.
3. Respect Confidentiality
 - a. Maintain extreme caution with case records.
 - b. A breach in records confidentiality could destroy our reputation, trust with our partner agencies and be cause for potential lawsuits.
 - c. When working with volunteers, stress the importance of confidentiality of written documents as well as spoken word. You never know who's at the next table.
4. Deal with Conflict Well
 - a. Avoid gossip. If there's a problem with someone, speak to that person in the kindest way possible, using "I" statements. Open your mind and your heart to hearing their story.
 - b. If you have a problem with someone outside of TP, go to your supervisor to explore a positive approach to use in solving the problem.
 - c. If you have a problem with any TP staff member, go directly to that person to discuss the problem. If you feel a need to prebrief speaking with that person, talk to your supervisor about it.
5. Be Reliable
 - a. Show up on time for all meetings and events.
 - b. "Show up" in general. Be a true representative, a team player and a good collaborator.
 - c. Be impeccable with your word. Do what you say you'll do or get back to the person and amend your statement.

6. Hone Your People Skills
 - a. Be positive in verbal and nonverbal communication.
 - b. Show respect and appreciation through your words and actions.
 - c. Share all valid and relevant information with staff.
7. Honor Our Principles
 - a. Try to always let your behavior be guided by the 5 R's.
 - b. Give priority to the first "R" -- Respect.
 - c. When in doubt, do the most loving thing you can think of at that moment.
8. Support Our Volunteers
 - a. Our staff is here to serve our volunteers as they primarily deliver our services.
 - b. Always let the volunteers know how much we value them as people, respect their expertise, and recognize their contributions to our work.

The 5 R's

Early on I began writing about the basic values of restorative justice to establish a written foundation to guide our staff and volunteers that could be easily remembered. The first version was called *The 4 R's*. Subsequently, I added the fifth "R," Reintegration, which is still the hardest one to incorporate into our practice, but clearly essential in establishing that our positive results have last impact. The 5 R's are the essential foundation of our restorative justice practice.

The 5 R's of Restorative Justice

The Values Guiding the Longmont Community Justice Partnership
Beverly B. Title, Ph.D.

Respect

Respect is the key ingredient that holds the container for all restorative practices, and it is what keeps the process safe. It is essential that all persons in a restorative process be treated with respect. Every person is expected to show respect for others and for themselves. Restorative processes require deep listening, done in a way that does not presume we know what the speaker is going to say, but that we honor the importance of the other's point of view. Our focus for listening is to understand other people, so, even if we disagree with their thinking, we can be respectful and try hard to comprehend how it seems to them.

Responsibility

For restorative practices to be effective, personal responsibility must be taken. Each person needs to take responsibility for any harm that was caused to another, admitting any wrong that was done, even if it was unintentional. Taking responsibility also includes a willingness to give an explanation of the harmful behavior. All persons in the circle are asked to search deeply in their hearts and minds to discover if there is any part of the matter at hand for which they have some responsibility. Everyone needs to be willing to accept responsibility for his or her own behavior.

Repair

The restorative approach is to repair the harm that was done to the fullest extent possible, recognizing that harm may extend beyond anyone's capacity for repair. It is this principle that allows us to set aside thoughts of revenge and punishment. Once the persons involved have accepted responsibility for their behavior and they have heard in the restorative process about how others were harmed by their action, they are expected to make repair. It is through taking responsibility for one's own behavior and making repair that persons may regain or strengthen their self-respect and the respect of others.

Relationship

Restorative practices recognize that when a wrong occurs, individuals and communities feel violated. It is the damage to these relationships that is primarily important and is the central focus of what restorative practices seek to address. When relationships are strong, people experience more fulfilling lives, and communities become places where we want to live. Relationships may be mended through the willingness to be accountable for one's actions and to make repair of harms done.

Reintegration

For the restorative process to be complete, persons who may have felt alienated, must be accepted into the community. Reintegration is realized when all persons have put the hurt behind them and moved into a new role in the community. This new role recognizes their worth and the importance of the new learning that has been accomplished. The person having shown him or herself to be an honorable person through acceptance of responsibility and repair of harm has transformed the hurtful act. At the reintegration point, all parties are back in right relationship with each other and with the community. This reintegration process is the final step in achieving wholeness.

And the Story Goes Forward. . .

One of the people whose indigenous wisdom influenced the development of Teaching Peace was Paula Underwood Spencer, Harvard trained attorney, or Turtle Woman Singing as she's known as the storyteller of her tribe. This quote from her book, *The Walking People*, captures the wisdom that began this journey and also points the way to the future:

“If there is not one among us who contains sufficient wisdom, many people together may find a clear path.”

As I leave my official leadership roles in Teaching Peace, I go with full knowledge and confidence that it is being left in the enormously capable and loving hands of Deb Witzel and the Executive Board, Marian Head, Mike Butler, Don Haddad, and Dan Benavidez. Many thanks for your willingness to guide this organization forward, and, when your term expires, please pass it along to the next leaders for the benefit of our whole community that there continues to exist an organization dedicated to teaching peace, for our children and our children's children.