

COMPARING AND CONTRASTING RESTORATIVE INTERVENTIONS

	Restorative CIRCLES	Restorative CONFERENCES	MEDIATION
Pre Meeting Lay Foundation	Circle keeper meets with parties separately to get first hand description of what happened, explain process, answer questions, build trust, make sure the process is suitable and parties are willing	Facilitator meets with parties separately to get first hand description of what happened, explain process, answer questions, build trust, share script, make sure the process is suitable and parties are willing	Mediator meets with parties separately to get first hand description of what happened, explain process, answer questions, build trust, make sure the process is suitable and parties are willing
Prep	Circle keeper prepares opening/closing ceremony and a series of questions to sequence the process	Facilitator reviews the script	Mediator reviews the questions
Facilitation	Facilitator (known as the “circle keeper”) is also participant and stakeholder.	Facilitator is considered to be impartial, s/he doesn’t participate as a stakeholder.	Mediator is considered to be impartial, s/he doesn’t participate as a stakeholder.
Seating	Participants, including the keeper, sit in a circle, without obstacles in between	Participants and keeper sit in a circle, with or without obstacles in between	Participants and mediators sit at a table, preferably a round one. Disputants face the mediator to start with
Talking Piece	A meaningful talking piece facilitates the dialogue	Facilitator directs the dialogue, especially early on, open dialogue maybe encouraged later on	Mediator directs the dialogue especially early on, open dialogue maybe encouraged later on
Center Piece	A meaningful center piece sits as a focal point at the center of the circle.	Participants sit in a circle. There is no center piece.	Participants sit facing the mediator often, away from each other, on opposite sides of a table.
Ceremonies	There is a deliberate marking of a space through on opening and closing ceremony.	There is an opening statement consistent with pre-meetings. There is no ceremony.	There is an opening statement introducing the mediator, the process and guidelines
Values	Participants discuss values and get acquainted before turning to issues.	Values are not discussed. The incident to be addressed in the conference is raised at the start	Values are not discussed. The issues to be addressed in the mediation are raised at the start
Guidelines	Participants create guidelines (circle agreements) together at the start of the process and agree on them before moving on.	Facilitator provides guidelines/ground rules at the start of the process and asks if participants are in agreement and whether they’d like to add any.	Facilitator provides guidelines/ground rules at the start of the process and asks if participants are in agreement and whether they’d like to add any.
Addressing Issues	There is balance between getting acquainted and building relationships on the one hand and addressing issues and developing action plans on the other. (PTO)	Facilitator briefly allows participants to introduce themselves and the reason they are at the conference. After that, the conference goes directly into identifying issues.	The facilitator briefly introduces participants and guidelines. After that, the mediation goes directly into identifying issues.
Follow-Up Meetings	Follow up meetings are held to make sure action plans are being upheld or need to be adjusted	Follow up meetings are held to make sure action plans are being upheld or need to be adjusted	Follow up meetings are held to make sure action plans are being upheld or need to be adjusted