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reentry. The presentation began with an outline of the workshop which included a) an overview of reentry, b) how restorative justice can be useful in reentry processes, and c) a more in-depth look at restorative circle process dialogue with a video example and discussion of Huikahi reconciliation circles.

Before covering new material, there was a slide dedicated to a “recap” of restorative justice and its principles. This was beneficial for staff members in attendance who were not present at the first workshop. Likewise, because the second workshop took place later than anticipated due to scheduling difficulties, this was a helpful refresher for other staff members as well. This led to a discussion of reentry facts and statistics to preface the presentation. For example, staff were made aware of the fact that 95 percent of the prison population is expected to return home in the future (Petersilia, 2003). Among those who left prison in 2014, it was the case that approximately 55 percent returned (or recidivated) within five years. To segue into the relationship between reentry and restorative justice, we posed the question, “What can be done to improve the reentry process and potentially reduce recidivism?”

To answer this, the next slide highlighted how utilizing restorative justice can be valuable regarding reentry. Through different programs central to restorative justice, such as circle process dialogue, it is possible to ameliorate the transition from prison to community and potentially reduce recidivism in the process. As explored in Workshop I, restorative justice processes can help address the varying needs of individuals returning from incarceration because of how dynamic restorative justice is. Restorative tools can likewise help restore broken relationships, where applicable, which is one of the most pressing needs of those returning from incarceration. Within restorative justice, there is also a continued emphasis on a reentering person’s strengths and the removal of negative, often stigmatizing labels through the use of strengths-based language central to SFBT.

Workshop II was the first time staff were introduced to a restorative circle process focused on addressing reentry needs. They were shown a video from Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth (RJOY)<sup>2</sup> an organization that aims to interrupt the cycle of incarceration by promoting restorative justice intervention in schools, communities, and the juvenile justice system. In the video shown to LINC staff, members from RJOY teamed up with the Oakland Unified School District to provide a restorative reentry circle for Cedric, a young man returning to his high school after a period of juvenile detention. This circle was attended by Cedric, Cedric’s mother and step-father, the principle of Cedric’s school, Cedric’s counselor, and many other members from Cedric’s school system and surrounding community. Together, the group focused on Cedric’s needs moving forward and created a written reentry plan to meet those needs. They also talked about what members of the community, as stakeholders, needed from Cedric, whether that was an increased dedication to his studies or more open communication with his family, teachers, and counselors. One of the most important underlying themes of the circle, as is the case with most restorative justice circles, was the unconditional support shown by everyone in attendance. This became very clear during the closing ceremony of the circle where each member of the community was invited to give Cedric and his mother a hug and a few words of support. The group agreed to meet again in the future to talk about Cedric’s successes and to address/work through any roadblocks he might encounter along the way.

There was a fairly lengthy group discussion after the video, with many LINC staff citing a personal connection to Cedric’s life. Reflecting on their teenage years and young adulthood,

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<sup>2</sup> Friedman, C. (2013). Restorative Welcome and Reentry Circle. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSJ2GPiptvc>

















