*RESTORATIVE PRACTICE*

*Restorative Practice* refers to the daily practice of restoring the possibility of a world where all beings can flourish— in communities that honour our inextricable interconnectedness and recognize that individual well-being is tied to collective well-being. Restorative refers to a way of being that engages four verbs on a consistent basis: noticing, wondering, acknowledging, and appreciating.

**Noticing**—Robin Wall Kimmerer writes, "The earth is so richly endowed that the least we can do is to pay attention." The French philosopher Simone Weil observed that "absolute unmixed attention is a form of prayer." The gift and practice of attentiveness are paramount.

**Wondering**—Cultivating curiosity. We “inter-are”, to borrow Thich Nhat Hanh's phrase. When a person or process stymies, we can first be curious, before we rush to judgment. When our own behaviour mystifies, disappoints, or impedes us, we can meet that behaviour with curiosity, compassionately inquiring what feelings and unmet needs lie beneath. We can wonder what another being experiences.

**Acknowledging**—listening to another's naming of an experience, a sensation, a perspective, a truth—recognizing the validity even if we don't understand or we have a different experience. To acknowledge is to bear witness and give voice to the act of witnessing. Acknowledging systems of oppression and privilege; personal, collective, and historic trauma; and expressing humility (acknowledging what we don't know) are central to restorative practice.

**Appreciating**—this entails understanding; it may or may not involve gratitude. We can appreciate (recognize) someone's suffering without being grateful that the person suffers. Gratitude can play a role here. It is useful to identify and name the gifts/lessons embedded in challenging moments, processes, and interactions.

We all need practices that build habits of restorative living. These verbs help us do that. Central to being restorative are practices of empathy and accountability. Being restorative means recognizing we all exist on a continuum of harm: we all experience it, cause it, witness it to varying degrees, sometimes simultaneously. And potentially, we exist on a continuum of healing that means we can heal, witness, and facilitate healing, sometimes simultaneously.

At the Women’s Interval Home, we offer both Restorative Practices and Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice

1. Community Conferencing designed to promote relationship building, trust, and social-emotional skills to address concerns, conflict, feelings and behaviours in any community setting – schools, workplace, organizations, and businesses.
2. Victim-Offender Dialogue circles bring victims and offenders together, along with support people to resolve instances of conflict and harm.

Restorative Practice

1. Art Trauma Workshop – designed for survivors of trauma to tell their stories through mixed media to cultivate self-awareness and engage in curiosity of our whole selves without judgement.
2. Restore You – a 10-week program designed to facilitate self-awareness in a way that retains dignity while being accountable to our life circumstances.