Interdisciplinary Approaches to Elder Justice: Unlocking the Potential of Restorative Practices

Draft agenda (12-23-19) – Subject to Change

8:15-8:45 Check in, Networking and Continental Breakfast

8:45-9:00 Welcome and Introduction
- Craig Boise, JD, Dean, Syracuse University College of Law
- Maria Brown, Ph.D., LMSW, Assistant Research Professor, David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics
- Mary Helen McNeal, JD, Professor of Law and Director of the Elder and Health Law Clinic, Syracuse University College of Law

9:00-9:45 Opening Keynote – What is Restorative Justice?


Restorative justice is a significant innovation in the administration of justice and involves a different way of thinking and responding to crimes and other harms. In this keynote, Professor Marshall will explore the origins, historical development and theories of restorative practice and share how lessons learned from past implementation might inform future use in the field of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation.

9:45 – 11:00 Panel on Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Elder Abuse
- Dr. Tony Rosen, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College and founder of the Vulnerable Elder Protection Team at the New York-Presbyterian Hospital / Weill Cornell Medical College
• Dr. Shelly Jackson, Institute of Law, Psychiatry, and Public Policy, University of Virginia
• Lisa Nerenberg, MSW, MPH, Executive Director of the California Elder Justice Coalition
• Law: Not yet finalized

Moderator: Deborah J. Monahan, Ph.D., L.M.S.W., Associate Dean for Research, Professor, School of Social Work, Research Center, Falk College, Syracuse University

The issue of elder abuse is complex. Research is increasingly available, and new interventions are being evaluated. In this session, expert panelists will share their perspectives about current practices in the field from their particular disciplines, what has worked and what is problematic, suggestions for alternative interventions, and how they measure success.

11:00-11:15 Break

11:15 – 12:00 Second Keynote – What is Justice?
  • Jennifer Llewellyn, Yogis and Keddy Chair in Human Rights Law and Professor of Law, Dalhousie University Schulich School of Law, Halifax, Nova Scotia

  How and what do we measure when evaluating programs designed to achieve “justice?” Professor Llewellyn will challenge us to reconsider how we think about success, moving away from individualistic notions embedded in mainstream justice systems, to consider evaluative tools and approaches that take into account the relational aspects of restorative models.

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-2:00 Panel on Existing Projects – Brief description, successes and challenges
  • Coleta Walker, Associate Director, Red Hook Peacemaking Program, Red Hook Community Justice Center, Brooklyn, NY
  • John Williams, Emeritus Professor of Law, Aberysthwyth University, Wales, Choice Project
  • Sharon Elliot, Senior Safety Coordinator, Annapolis County, Nova Scotia, Canada
  • Jocelyn Yerxa, Nova Scotia Department of Seniors, Social Innovation Lab on Population Aging
  • Jacqueline Gray, Associate Director and Research Professor, University of North Dakota, Center for Rural Health
  • Moderator: Nina Kohn, David M. Levy Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Research, Syracuse University College of Law
In this session, panelists will briefly describe their current projects and their use of restorative principles to address elder abuse. They will discuss how these projects have been successful, explore the challenges they have encountered, and discuss how they are addressing these challenges.

2:00-3:00  Emerging Restorative Approaches Addressing Elder Abuse

- Sarah Reckess, Director at the Center for Court Innovation - Upstate, Syracuse, New York
- Chris Marshall – The Diana Unwin Chair in Restorative Justice, Wellington School of Business and Government, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Pilot project funded by Ministry of Social Development, Wellington, NZ
- Patricia Kimball, Executive Director, Elder Abuse Institute of Maine
- John Dussich, Professor Emeritus, Criminology, Fresno State University

Moderator:  Merrill Silverstein, Ph.D., Marjorie Cantor Professor of Aging Studies Department of Human Development and Family Science, Aging Studies Institute, Syracuse University

In this session, panelists will explore how issues of elder abuse have challenged and informed their restorative practice work. Attendees will learn how restorative practices are being incorporated to address social isolation and prevention of elder abuse as well as creating accountability for those who harm older adults.

3:00-3:15  Break

3:15 – 4:00  Break Out Sessions Discussing Best Practices

- Facilitator, Jenny Ackley, MSW, Abuse in Later Life Project Coordinator, Vera House Inc.

In this session, attendees will have time in small groups to discuss challenges that might arise in the use of Restorative Justice in cases of elder abuse and what best practices might alleviate those concerns. Challenge areas will include which types of abuse are appropriate for restorative practices; how capacity issues of the older adult may impact its use; and how to measure success, as well as other topics.

4:00-4:30  Groups Report Back

4:30-5:00  Implementation of Best Practices and Next Steps –
Erika Sasson, Director of Restorative Practices, Center for Court Innovation

In this session, attendees will learn strategies for incorporating best practices into a restorative practice project. Ms. Sasson will explore the lessons she has learned in the planning and development of criminal justice and education projects that use restorative practices and identify how needs assessments, research, and evidence-based practices can inform project design. She will conclude with suggestions for addressing challenges identified in the group discussions, and recommended best practices for moving forward with restorative projects addressing elder abuse.

5:00 Closing and Reception