



*A Narrative Practice*



# Building Workplace Capacity through a Peer Narrative Restorative Approach

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# What we will be sharing with you today ...

## The Hobart City Mission Experience

- Building capacity through a **peer restorative approach** to conflict
- Fair Treatment Program
- Stages of the program
- Fair Treatment Contact Officers: role & training

## The Narrative Restorative Approach

- The philosophy informing it
- What that means for Conflict and Power and its purpose
- The Narrative Restorative framework
- The Meetings - Separate and Joint
- The Statement of Position Map and the notion of Externalising Conversations



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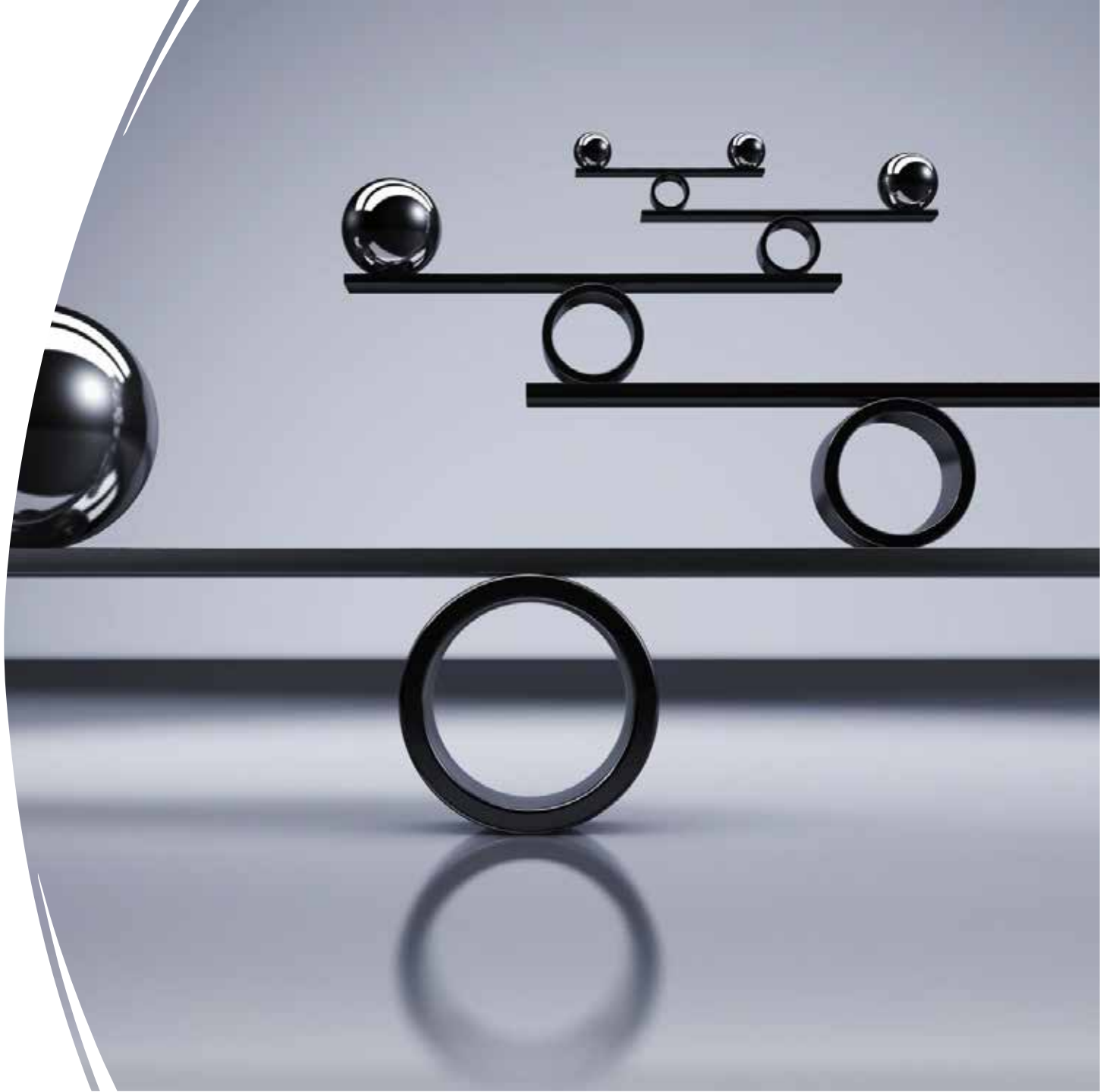
## The Hobart City Mission Context

- Hobart City Mission grew significantly between 2021 - 2023
- More programs, a flourishing retail division (op shops), expanding Disability workforce alongside several hundred volunteers
- Subsequent growth in internal support services such as People and Culture, Marketing and Finance
- This growth also brought an increase in conflicts and disputes between workers
- The proposal was embraced to move to an **internal-led early intervention program, which builds capacity and normalises addressing problems and conflicts early**
- The name given to the peer program is Fair Treatment and those recruited as Fair Treatment Contact Officers (FTCOs)

# What do we mean by Fair Treatment?

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- Equality and fairness
- An aspect of organisational justice with regard to both process and outcome
- Impartiality
- Justice types: Distributive; procedural; interactional and inviting responsibility



# Building capacity

## Meaning:

The improvement in an individual or organisation's facility to produce, perform and deploy

## And includes:

Skills, abilities, processes and resources to survive and thrive in a fast- changing world



# The peer program

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## Purpose

To build strong quality working relationships while developing organisational conflict dissolution competence.

In ways that build capacity and creates and maintains a culture of fair treatment.

Providing a safe early-intervention approach to dealing with conflict, disagreements and unfair treatment.

Creating an alternative approach to resolve conflict outside of HR & Management involvement

*How we deal with conflict, with disagreement, with bullying, shapes the culture of an organisation*

# The stages



Stage 1

Policy Review (including process); Recruitment



Stage 2

Training in Contact Officer role



Stage 3

Training in Peer Narrative Restorative facilitation role



Stage 4

Roll Out & Ongoing mentoring



# Training the FTCO's: Dual Role

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## **'Contact Only' role:**

- to provide information on policies and practices that may have brought the conflict or allegation and to provide support

## **'Peer Narrative Restorative' role:**

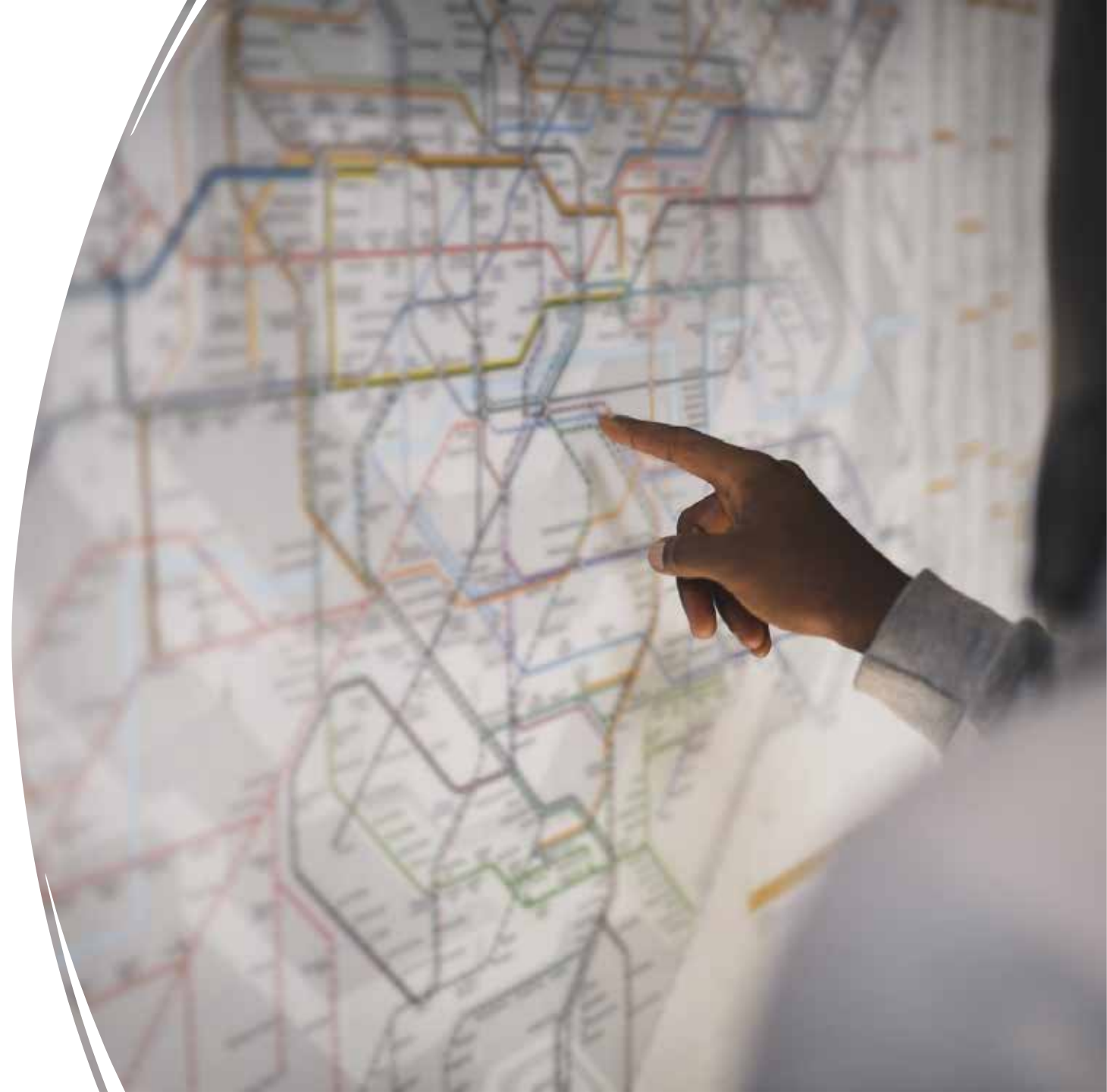
- Only if the FTCO has not provided info under the contact role
- The philosophy informing narrative practice
- The maps of narrative practice (from the work of Michael White)
- The process (shaped by the work of Winslade and Monk)



# The Narrative Restorative Approach: where does it come from?

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- From the Maps and the Practices of Michael White's narrative therapy work and incorporating them into dispute resolution approaches
- And building on the work of Winslade and Monk and particularly their restorative work in schools





# What informs it and what does it say about Identity?

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- Informed by post structuralist thought including the work of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Jerome Bruner
- Identity is co-created in relationships with others, it is socially constructed and is the outcome of the stories we develop through life
- These stories are informed by our culture, history and lived experience
- And rather than interests and needs, the focus is on intentional states of beliefs; intentions; desires; commitments and the dominant discourses that inform them
- And how this folk psychology gets us judging ourselves and one another about our and their worthwhileness
- This speaks to Foucault's ideas about modern power!



# What does it say about Conflict and Power?

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- Conflict is socially and culturally constructed
- Seen as a contest over entitlement and/or of meaning shaped by the dominant discourses prevailing in one's life
- These discourses construct and define relationships of power
- That is who has a voice and who has not; what can be said and what cannot be spoken of



# The Purpose of a Narrative Restorative Approach

To harvest collective wisdom to facilitate the moving from an account of events that fashions a story of grievance to one where new stories of shared understanding, mutual commitment and changed ongoing preferred relationships are possible **BY**

Deconstructing the conflict;  
Externalising the problem story fuelling the conflict; Exposing the discourses informing the conflict and building alternative constructions

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# A Framework or Map

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1

Preparation of  
Self

2

Inviting people  
to the  
conversation /  
conference

3

Meeting the  
participants  
separately

4

The Joint  
Meeting

5

The Review  
Meeting



# A closer look at Stage 3: Separate meetings



Externalise the 'conflict' and its effects



Invite the person to take a position in relation to the 'conflict' and seeing it as a restraint



Looking for and being curious about alternative experiences of relationship and discourses that have informed the 'conflict'



Exploring the hopes for the joint meeting and the relationship



Externalising the Hope Story



Describing the next stage with the rationale for it

# A closer look at Stage 4: The Joint Meeting

Setting the scene: Process; how to engage; confidentiality etc.

Inviting each to talk about their Hopes

Identifying the factors with a restraining influence

Naming and externalising

Identifying the discourses that feed the restraint

Looking for the alternative story from the Hopes, and re-authoring

Document



# Externalising: The Statement of Position Map

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*“Externalising conversations put back into the realm of culture and history what was created in culture and history” Carey & Russell 2004*

## The Map and 4 stages of inquiry

1. Negotiating a particular experience near definition ... naming or objectifying the ‘problem’
2. Mapping the effects of the problem
3. Evaluating the effects of the problem activities
4. Justifying the evaluation



# Contact us

This is just a brief overview...

Contact us for more information!

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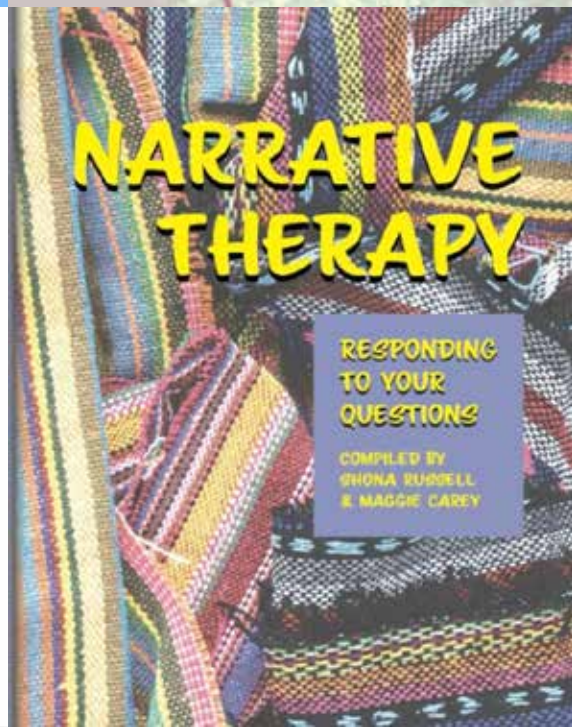
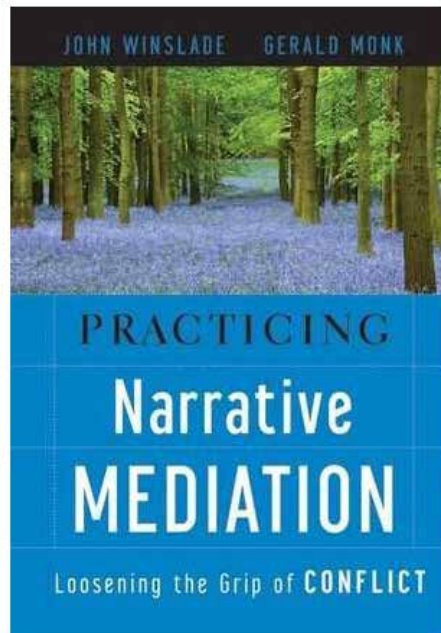
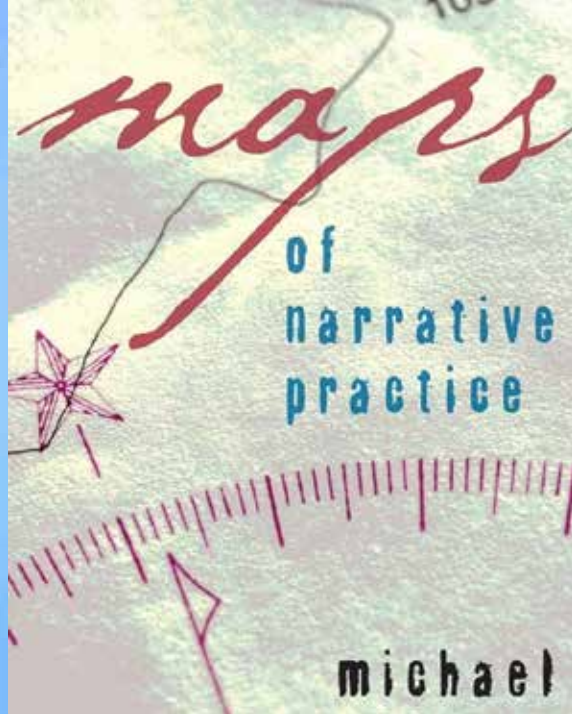


Any Questions?

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# JEROME BRUNER ACTS OF MEANING



## References

- Maps of Narrative Practice – Michael White
- Practising Narrative Mediation, Loosening the Grip of CONFLICT – John Winslade & Gerald Monk
- Narrative Therapy, Responding to your Questions – Shona Russell & Maggie Carey
- Acts of Meaning – Jerome Bruner