"Even a child can mediate."
WHAT KIND OF LEARNING ARE RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS PRODUCING?

An article on survey results

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1. INTRODUCTION

"The good thing was that the pupils could participate in this." (Party of mediation 2009)

The follow-up of mediation activity in schools for the last ten years proves that pupils have over all become more participatory in the schools where mediation is used. According to a survey made by the School mediation project of the Finnish Forum for Mediation, between 9000 and 10000 dispute and bullying cases are mediated each year in the 360 schools where trained peer mediators are used. All cases have at least two parties, so we can say that the conflicts of a total of 20 000 pupils are being mediated on a yearly basis. The acting mediators are pupils one or two years senior to the parties. All in all, the school mediation activity touches over 80 000 pupils and their guardians. (Finnish Forum for Mediation, later in the text called FFM). The mediation activity is based on restorative thinking and a wide restorative approach to dealing with hurtful situations together has already been applied in some of the schools.

By restorative approach I mean practices, methods or discussions in which the parties of a conflict situation can meet in a safe environment and strive to repair the harm caused to their relationship. The survey material comes from the schools in which the school mediation method has been used. In conflicts between pupils, trained pupils have been peer mediators. A trained adult and a trained pupil mediator have mediated conflicts between pupils and teachers. In the restorative approach, the harmfulness of any behaviour is not evaluated from the outside but rather the parties of the conflict can themselves describe the seriousness of a given situation. If both parties are willing, virtually all conlicts can be solved with the mediation method. The restorative approach focuses on repairing the damaged relationship and reaching an agreement that directs future beahaviour in such a way that the relationship does not get similarly damaged in the future.

The learning experience produced by the school mediation method has not been studied before. Many studies related to discipline in schools have however been conducted, but they have mostly focused on sanction oriented methods and their interest has been on how much bullying a given method has been able to reduce. The chance for learning even in the most challenging situations of everyday life has not been given much attention in these studies. Mediation is a voluntary method of conflict management in which an

impartial outside party, the mediator, helps the parties of the argument, through a particular mediation process, to come to an agreement that satisfies the arguing parties. The mediator directs the process which outcome is that the parties themselves find a solution. Mediation is characterized by early intervention and often prevention of future crimes or conflicts. Its aim is to search for positive, sustainable solutions. An agreement is a highly positive social value. Not all conversation is mediation. In mediation, all the principles of the restorative approach must be met: mediation is voluntary, impartial, confidential, and it entails no punishments. It is of upmost importance that the parties meet face to face and solve their conflict together.

The ultimate goal in developing the school mediation is to increase democracy and participation in the schools. This means for instance the right discursive approach that enables the parties to find solutions to their conflicts themselves. A promise made in one's own words fits its maker and is much easier to keep than a promise formulated by someone else. In this article, I will describe the results of my latest survey (Gellin 2011) with a particular focus on the pupils' own opinions about mediation. My focus is on the pupils' experiences of mediation as a method, of the role of the mediator as well as of how well mediation has been integrated into the school community. I am particularly interested in the peer mediators' views on what they themselves as well as the parties have learned from mediation.

2. A RESTORATIVE APPROACH INDUCES PARTICIPATION

"We believe that everyone's thoughts are important, be they a pupil or a teacher – we always do things together." (Head master of a peer mediation school, 2009)

A strong development phase is going on at the moment in the different restorative approaches all over the western world, on an individual level as well as on an international level. During the last twenty years mediation has become a significant means of dispute resolution in different areas of society. In Finland during the last year, crisis management has been strongly discussed as a goal for the nation's social capital. The Finnish media has also largely discussed bullying and harmful behaviour in work communities, for instance in the Finnish Parliament.

The Finnish Forum for Mediation (FFM) was founded in 2003 and it acts as a supporting umbrella organisation for mediation in different areas. As well as the school mediation method in Finland, FFM has also developed family mediation and work community mediation in separate projects. The organisation supports different areas of mediation. By mediation in criminal cases is meant free service in which the offender and the victim are given possibility to meet each other confidentially, in the presence of an impartial mediator, and discuss the material and psychological harm caused on the victim as well as to come to a common understanding on the means of repairing the harm. In environmental mediation, the people whose environment is being changed by an environmental action, are brought together to discuss the harm caused by the action and mediation allows for results to be gained quickly and cheaply. Mediation is also used in the resolution of international conflicts, particularly where hostilities run deep and the parties' own efforts for reconciliation have failed. International mediation is based on avoidance of the use of power or violence. Court mediation has judges acting as mediators. The Finnish Bar Association offers mediation in commercial disputes, work relationships and family disputes. (FFM).

In the Finnish political programme for the wellbeing of children and youngsters, participation is being reinforced by for example enhancing the child friendliness of court proceedings. This can be done by enhancing mediation in criminal cases. Two new laws concerning mediation came into effect in Finland in 2006, one concerning mediation in criminal cases and some other disputes, and another concerning dispute mediation in courts. The mediation of criminal cases and other disputes, especially when it concerns the young, is flexible, quick and it enables the parties to participate and take responsibility. Mediation is also a much friendlier process than traditional court proceedings are, because it is guided by trained voluntary mediators and without all the official bureaucracy. From the youngsters' point of view, it is essential that they themselves can participate in the solving of the conflict, as is the case in mediation. The role of the parents of the under aged is to support their child. It is essential to search for solutions directed at the future rather that to search for punishments. These solutions help the young to change their future behaviour and to avoid repeating the committed crime.

From the point of view of the school mediation project, the research results gained by FFM's work community mediation as well as family mediation project are particularly

important. The mediation skills learned in school can later be used in other areas of life, such as work communities. The leader of FFM's work community mediation project, Timo Pehrman, has stated that most of the conflicts in work communities resemble the conflicts that occur in schools. Back-stabbing, misunderstanding and misreading as well as unwanted physical contacts are the most common causes for conflicts also in the work communities (Pehrman 2010, 143-148).

The financial benefits of mediation for the society are also being researched. It is understandable that a conflict solved locally and almost immediately saves both time and money as well as mental resources. As a method, mediation is both flexible and efficient and allows for the parties to reach an agreement themselves without bureaucracy. The agreement comes into effect immediately and its effects quickly become apparent also to the people close to the parties. The time saved by this flexible action alone can be calculated into money within each community. Further benefits are fewer abcences due to sickness, more effective working environment, savings gained by avoided court handlings and the parties returning to their work communities, socially healed and fit for work. Researcher Laura Mirsky (2009) has evaluated the financial effects of mediation in schools and gathered a lot of material on both the improved working environment in schools as well as the money saved. As an example, she states in an article published on the E-Forum of The International Institute of Restorative Practices that restorative action reduced the costs of the resolution of various conflicts by over 60 000 euros during one semester (Mirsky 2009, 2), (Improving School…). Mirsky has also studied three American schools' path towards becoming restorative schools and has had extremely positive results that show a better working environment in schools as well as less burn out amongst the school staff (Mirsky 2008, 31-55.)

The European Forum for Restorative Justice also has ongoing research on restorative practices in Europe. Their research project "Building Social Support for Restorative Justice" is about to finish a large survey / guide book on supporting restorative action in the different areas of society. For Finland's part, both FFM's school mediation project and the National council for Crime Prevention have taken part in producing material for the survey.

2.1 School culture and the basis for school mediation

"And then you also learn to like cooperation." (A peer mediator 2009)

A particular school culture has a strong effect on how pupils can learn and grow thorough experience within the school's everyday life. A school culture consists of all the formal and informal rules of the school, the different models for behaviour as well as values, principles, and the criteria on which the quality of the school work is based. The school's educational goals as well as its values should materialise within the school culture. Schools should aim at a culture that is open and communicative and supports cooperation within the school as well as with the pupils' homes and the rest of the society. The pupils themselves should be able to participate in creating and developing the school culture. The values of basic education are human rights, equality, democracy, the preservation of nature and the acceptance of multiculturalism. Basic education enhances the sense of community, responsibility, and the respect for individual rights and liberty. (The Curriculum for Basic Education 2004.)

According to the sixth article of the Finnish Constitution, children should be treated equally as individuals and they should be able to influence matters which concern them, in accordance with their age and understanding. The fourteenth article of the Constitution states that the public authority should enhance both individuals' participation in social action as well as their influence on the decision-making that concerns them. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) demands that all the signed states guarantee children's rights to freely express their views in all matters that concern them. (12th article). The education of the child should be directed to the preparation of the child for a responsible life in a free society (29th article). The UN's Universal Declaration of Human rights states that education should be directed to the full development of the human personality and education should promote understanding and tolerance (26.th article). According to the second article of the Finnish law for basic education, education should support the pupils' growth to humanity and participation in a responsible society as well as teach those important skills and knowledge. It is a goal of the new Finnish law concerning youth (1 §) that the young become more active within the society and more socially empowered.

Working against school bullying was brought to public attention during the Dutch EU chairmanship, and the first seminar concerning it was organised in Utrecht, Holland in 1997. During the first months of the next year, six European countries began the so called CONNECT-project which aim was to act against violence. In Finland, the CONNECT.fi -project was coordinated by The Finnish Centre for Health Promotion. Currently a survey is being made in the different EU countries on youngster's perceptions of justice and criminal proceedings. The International Juvenile Justice Observatory, for its part, is crafting guidelines for so called "child friendly" justice in cooperation with the European Council and several other organisations.

In Finland, surveys on school health are organised regularly. According to these, around 10 % of the pupils experience bullying. The definition of school bullying is restricted to repeated and intentional negative behaviour directed at a weaker party (see Rimpelä & Fröjd 2010, 191). This definition however leaves out much of the disturbing behaviour which would need early intervention. Päivi Hamarus' (2006) doctoral thesis from 2006 concentrates on school bullying as a phenomenon. Its material consists of pupils' interviews. According to her research, bullying consists of momentary acts in interaction and can therefore not easily be noticed by an outside party. Bullying can consist of meanings that derive from the norm and can therefore go undetected by grown-ups. Hamarus studies bullying from a social and cultural point of view, and states that the best way of ensuring a safe, bully-free learning environment is to invest in the pupils' social safety. Hamarus claims that the definition of bullying should be understood in a larger sense than before so that too narrow definition would not keep us from intervention. (Hamarus 2006, 204-206.)

In her doctoral thesis *Kasvuyhteisö nuoren tukena* ("The surrounding community's support for youngster's growth and development") researcher Noora Ellonen (2008) discusses social capital. She states that it is important for a good school climate that social support and control be divided evenly amongst the pupils. Ellonen sees that an equal and socially supportive school community demands tight groups in which pupils know one another and teachers know their pupils. A better sense of community is thus needed in schools, Ellonen concludes. (Ellonen 2008, 96-99.)

3. SURVEY RESULTS ON RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

"When I grow up, and in my workplace there appears bullying between my workmates, I can help them by mediating and they do not need to fight anymore" (A primary school peer mediator 2009)

The Lorenzo-project was realised as part of The Prince's Trust-project which included all in all, 1835 pupils and 226 teachers from 51 British schools. The British professor Helen Cowie (Naylor & Cowie 1999) acted as a researcher in the project and according to her, 30 percent of children are being bullied during their school years. A peer support system was started in the Lorenzo project schools and a year after, the pupils and teachers were asked whether it had helped. The victims felt that they had at last had the opportunity to talk about their problem and most of the people interviewed felt that the project had increased openness and improved the atmosphere in the schools. As a result of the project, the number of pupils keeping quiet about bullying was decreased by half. Ninety percent of the victims considered the project's activity very important, the teachers felt that school was safer than before and the parents appreciated it very much. Even the pupils, who didn't experience bullying, felt that the peer support systems were useful. (Naylor & Cowie 1999, 467- 479.)

In her doctoral thesis, Belinda Hopkins (2006a) lists recommendations with which schools can become restorative schools i.e. how restorative practices can be implemented into the schools everyday life. Hopkins states, that it is important first to train the school leadership and its senior staff to understand the restorative approach and its methods. After the training, this group can make a plan to train the school's entire personnel and how all the pupils are informed of and trained in the new practices. Hopkins considers it of upmost importance that after the start-up of the activity, there is real follow-up and updates on it in order to support the restorative approach in the school's everyday life. The group coordinating the restorative approach should be aware of the community's needs in such a way that its members feel heard in all situations. Hopkins concludes by stating that the restorative approach and methods should be mentioned in the school curriculum and it is useful for the school to build a network with other schools in which the restorative approach is being applied. (Hopkins 2006a, 221-223.)

In her licentiate thesis, the Swedish researcher Linda Marklund (2007) studied how mediation principles were followed in school mediation situations. She states in her conclusion that it is often the adult mediators' burden to try to determine which of the parties is right and which one is wrong. Marklund states that the most difficult part of mediation for the grown up mediators was to maintain a facilitative role. She compared this to the pupil mediators' mediation work and observed that the peer mediators had less difficulty in understanding and accepting the fact that there can be two equally "true" versions of the same story. Marklund describes how the peer mediators felt proud of having helped their friends. (Marklund 2007, 164-170.)

The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) has made a overview called "Improving school climate" on different surveys around the world concerning the effects of restorative practices in schools. The overview gives quantitative information on how restorative practices have changed the school climate. According the overview, restorative practices have significantly decreased the pupils' disturbing behaviour, school bullying, absences, and the number excluded pupil as well as conflicts directed at the school staff. The overview, published in 2009, gives an expert and encouraging picture of the significance of restorative practices on building a healthy school climate. (Improving School...)

3.1 Finnish survey results on school mediation

"It'll probably allow me to strengthen the peace, so that it would be more peaceful at school." (A pupils during school mediation training 2009)

In Finnish schools, the most commonly used mediation method is peer mediation. The Finnish peer mediation activity has been followed by surveys for the last ten years. The purpose of the surveys has been both to collect information on the activity at the schools and to produce material for further development work. The surveys have formed a circle that can be demonstrated by the following diagram 1.

Trainings from
2001 onwards

First survey 2003

Fourth survey and
outside evaluation
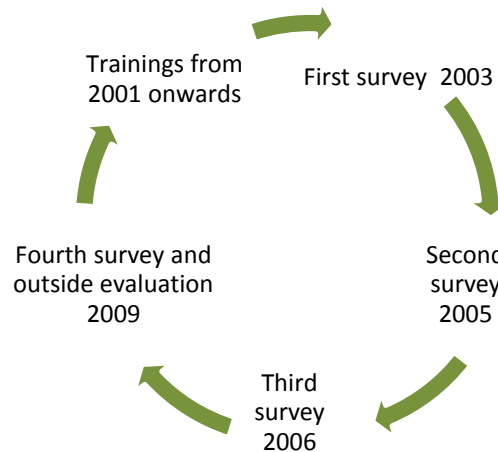2009

Second
survey
2005

Third
survey
2006

Diagram 1. The circle of Peer Mediation surveys

Based on the surveys made during 2003 - 2006, many of the conflicts between pupils were able to be mediated by the pupils themselves (peer mediators). According to the surveys, in 95% of the mediated cases, an agreement was reached and later kept. Most of the mediated cases concerned physical and verbal insults (altogether 85 % of the cases) the other 15 were characterised as property violations, forcing or discrimination. The previous surveys also show that the pupils have understood the mediation principles as such that both the mediators and the parties can work towards a solution and an agreement. The most important thing about a reached agreement is that it helps the pupil's situation because the unpleasant or hurtful behaviour is not repeated in the future anymore. This happens regardless of whether the harmful behaviour has been going on for long time, or whether it has been related to an imbalance of power between the pupils. The removal of a harmful act gives a peace of mind and lessens fear. (Gellin 2007, 62.)

The mediation parties have felt that the mediation principles have been very well achieved in mediation. Almost all of the parties felt that they have been able to tell what had happened in the conflict. 91 % of the pupils said that they had told their side of the story."Being heard" seemed to happen in most of the mediations, since 81 % of the parties agreed completely or partially with the claim "I was heard in peer mediation". In most of the mediations, an agreement was made and the parties said to have kept their promise. 85 % of the pupils also said that the promise was easy to keep and only 4 % had felt that keeping the promise was difficult. Almost everyone thought it good that there was peer

mediation method in the school, so that the pupils could resolve their conflicts without adults. (Gellin 2007, 64-65.)

In the previous surveys, both the supportive adults and the peer mediators themselves expressed their concern about how the entire school community could be induced to using the peer mediation method more. As a solution, they offered informing the pupils more and encouraging the pupils to make mediation initiatives themselves. Sufficient informing of the school community allows for the pupils to get the right picture about mediation and to understand it as a right and an alternative conflict resolution method. In the schools that have used peer mediation the longest, the pupils have really embraced it and often ask for the method in their own conflicts. The pupils' view of their own abilities and participation in solving conflicts challenges traditional methods of conflict intervention (Gellin 2007, 65-67.)

The external evaluation of Finnish peer mediation was carried out in 2009. Tomi Kiilakoski, a researcher for the Finnish Youth Research Society gathered his material thorough evaluative methods. Firstly, he states that the chosen method of action (peer mediation) suits schools. A comparatively short training enables the schools to move forward in the practice. Secondly, the commitment of a few teachers and staff members is very important in the start-up and continuity of the activity. Kiilakoski states that both pupils and teachers find the results of mediation to be very good. A significant part of mediations end in an agreement and the follow-up shows that almost 100 % of the agreements are kept. Most of the mediation initiatives come from adults; a mediation request is made, when a conflict is brought to adult attention. He remarks that mediation is seen as part of the structure that enhances participation in schools i.e. as one of the activities that lead the school into a more participatory direction. Concerning learning, Kiilakoski notes that mediation teaches about how to resolve a conflict and shows the importance of listening. He concludes by stating that one of the changes that mediation brings to the school culture is the reduced need of intervention by teachers and headmasters. On the other hand, the school's mediation activity has not changed all of the teachers' views or their punishment practices (Kiilakoski 2009, 39). In our society we seem to still lean on various outside instances such as social workers, professional educators, the police or the court system in our conflicts, and this enhances passiveness. To change this, the Finnish Brand Working Group has tasked (2010) Finnish schools with enhancing peaceful conflict resolution and mediation in the schools.

4. RESTORATIVE APPROACH AND LEARNING

"Education is a humane way of solving conflicts." (A teacher during mediation training 2009)

I have chosen restorative approach as the theoretical basis of my research, even though the actual restorative theory is going through a period of change at the moment. My approach combines both restorative thinking and restorative practices. Mediation is based strongly on the restorative approach. As a second theory base, I have chosen some main learning theories. Mediation is an active and social process and the learning gained in the process relates to experience, dialogue and reflection. I have therefore chosen experiential, cooperative, social and reflective learning theories and dialogue. In this article, I mostly examine concepts related to restorative approach. In the last chapter I will do conclusion on the chosen learning theories with restorative learning.

The restorative approach has its roots in many cultures' traditional interaction patterns, in which participation and encounter have played a significant role in solving different situations. Dr. Belinda Hopkins (2006), who works as a leading trainer at the Transforming Conflict Centre, describes the restorative approach by four different development stories. The first story is development of family group conferencing method in New Zealand: Maori communities were unhappy with the way their young people, who were in trouble because of criminal behaviour, were dealt by criminal system. Maori people felt that the system was against their own traditional custom of involving friends and family in resolving the situation. Instead of excluding youngsters from the community, the Maoris preferred to strive together to discuss harmful behaviour to reach common understanding on how youngsters could be reintegrated to their community. Family group conferencing was developed on this basis, and it is since 1989 the preferred way to deal with all young people's crimes. The second story develops from the first, describes Hopkins, since the New South Wales Police Force in Wagga Wagga (Australia), inspired by the New Zealand, improved their work with young offenders. This model has become known as "the scripted conferencing model".

The third story tells about Mark Yantzi and Dave Worth, Mennonites working in the criminal justice system in Kitchener, Ontario. In 1974, there were two youngsters who had

damaged the property of 22 inhabitants. Instead of a criminal process, the judge agreed to do new arrangements for these young men to meet their victims and make amends for what they had done. The process was of great significance to these young men and on the lives of many of the victims. Encouraged by the good result, they started a victim-offender mediation program (VORP) in Ontario, and it quickly spread to all over Canada and to United States and then to Europe. The fourth development story is also from Canada, where First Nation communities, especially in the Yukon, have developed sentencing circles; these involve the community in deciding the appropriate sentence and way forward for a young offender, endorsed by the judge, who also takes part. It is important to involve the community to deal with its own problems and give the opportunity to build relationships between people and communities. (Hopkins 2006b, 15-22; Hopkins 2006a, 19-20.)

From these stories can be gathered the different elements of the restorative approach: encounter, participation, restoration, compensation and restoring trust, a common search for better future behaviour and reintegration to the community and learning. Hopkins' (2006b, 63-93) basis for restorative thinking can be described by the following points:

1.   Everyone has a unique and equally valued perspective
2.   Thoughts influence emotions, emotions influence our subsequent actions
3.   Empathy and consideration for the other
4.   Identify the needs before identifying and agreeing strategies
5.   Trust that those with the problem have the answer. Empower them to find ways forward for themselves

Costello, Wachtel & Wachtel (2010) state that the roots for restorative theory and practices lay in restorative justice. Restorative justice means a method of criminal law where the emphasis lies on fixing and compensating for the broken human relationships. However, the concept of restorative justice has since 1990 been used to describe a larger phenomenon concerning the well being of entire communities, families and other significant close people of both parties of a crime and led to practices such as "conferences" and "circles". (Costello, Wachtel & Wachtel 2010, 6). Restorative justice is an institutional reaction developed around court practices, since it has been discovered that the valuing of individuals, respect and equal treatment create understanding and social harmony. This gives all parties the chance to express their emotions, experiences

and needs. Restorative justice can fix both the emotional and the financial harm caused to the victim as well as fixing his/her lost sense of security. The offender is allowed to encounter the victim directly and face the consequences of his/her actions and take responsibility for them. (European Best Practices… 20-21.)

Linda Marklund (2007) describes Professor Gerry Johnstone's view on the theory of restorative justice. Marklund emphasises the restorative principle according to which the concerned parties are considered the experts of their own situation. She states that contemporary law considers crimes as actions against the law instead of actions between two parties. This leads to the parties getting left with a bystander role in the court proceedings as their case is handled by experts of the court system such as attorneys and judges. Marklund continues that the proceedings of restorative justice turn these positions other way around by giving the parties control and the chance to participate in deciding how the matter is solved so that the harmful action is repaired and compensated for. Marklund demands a more responsible role from the society in order for the parties to have a chance to return to society. Mediation maintained by the society is part of this responsibility. (Marklund 2007, 105-107)

In her doctoral thesis, Belinda Hopkins (2006a) discusses the basis of restorative theory as seen by Wright and states that by restorative approach is generally meant a creative approach to a conflict so that the focus is on repairing the harm caused to human relations without punishment or shame. Hopkins sees restorative approach as the opposite of the traditional sense of justice which demands a punishment for the perpetrator. This justice being based on the idea that the offender has deserved his punishment and only when punished he can understand to change his behaviour (see Pehrman 2009, 27-28) Hopkins repeats the question that McDermott's restorative view asks of traditional justice; Do we really believe that causing more pain and suffering to already suffering parties, is either an effective or indeed a morally appropriate response? (Hopkins 2006a, 2-3)

In his book *Limits to pain*, the "Grand Old Man" of Mediation, the Norwegian criminal sociologist, Nils Christie encourages us to search for alternatives for punishment, not only for alternative forms of punishment. Christie states that both the offender and the surrounding community know what is wrong, and a lot of crimes speak for themselves – they are a clumsy way to say something. Seen this way, a crime should be considered a

starting point for dialogue instead of being answered by causing pain. Social constructions should be organised in a way that allows dialogue (Christie 1983,3). The key concepts of the restorative theory; repairing harm, human relations, chance and commitment create a strong contrast with the traditional punishment-focused justice that delivers shame, exclusion and punishments.

Professor Esa Poikela (2010) sees the restorative concept as a concept is based on environmental psychology which studies the relationship between an individual and his/her environment. Poikela refers to Wickens' view on how a person's ability of renewal is related to their ability to maintain focus. As the resources of focus, Wickens sees observation, knowing, memory, decision making and choice and control of action. Poikela also describes the four elements of Kaplan's focus theory and states that its basic elements – secession, well-being, space and harmony – create the restorative experience in which a person's resources return to the level that is necessary for coping with everyday life. Poikela lists the following as harmful to focus: unsolved problems, conflicts between thoughts and actions and unclear tasks. According to Poikela, in order of maintain focus, it is important to learn how to improve the factors of one's own motivation. Concerning learning, Poikela states that restorative experiences are an efficient support for long-term learning. He emphasises that the grounds for restorative learning must be examined not only through educational science but particularly through learning science. (Poikela 2010, 226-228)

In the Finnish book on mediation ("*Sovittelu*", Poikela, E. ed. 2010) the writers refer to Zehr, Johnstone & van Ness, Wright, Braithwait, Hopkins, Strang & Braithwait, Ahtisaari and Lange and state that restorative approach is part of a restoring social action in which an individual can participate and strive to cooperate with other parties in order to recognise damages, needs and responsibilities. Restorative approach means the creation of new working methods and the use of one's own resources in such a way that what we learn also control of our life in the future. The American Professor Howard Zehrn's (2002) views are in accordance with this but in his book *The little book of restorative justice* he emphasises the importance one value above others: respect. Zehr states that when we focus on the respect of the other, of the different, even of an enemy, a restorative approach is realised in which all parties can really be listened to and everyone's needs acknowledged.

In my article, I use the term restorative approach to describe an approach to conflicts that allows, instead of punishing, the repairing and restoring of human relationships during a true encounter between the parties. The goal is to find solutions that inhibit the repetition of the original harm. Mediation is one restorative method. Other restorative methods are for example circles, conferencing, and concentric circle (see Hopkins 2006b , Wachtel et al. 2010, Wachtel & Mirsky 2008). The material for my research was collected at schools which have used mediation as a restorative method. By the different mediated situations I mean conflicts that the parties have themselves been ready to solve. A conflict can be a misunderstanding, a misinterpretation, a disagreement, a fight, bullying, a violent act etc. The conflict has always caused harm to the human relations, which the restorative method then tries to restore. I use the word conflict to describe the starting point for all the mediated situations.

4.1 Restorative approaches and mediation in the school communities

"Well, it's definitely useful in schools… it is pretty educational" (A teacher during mediation training 2009)
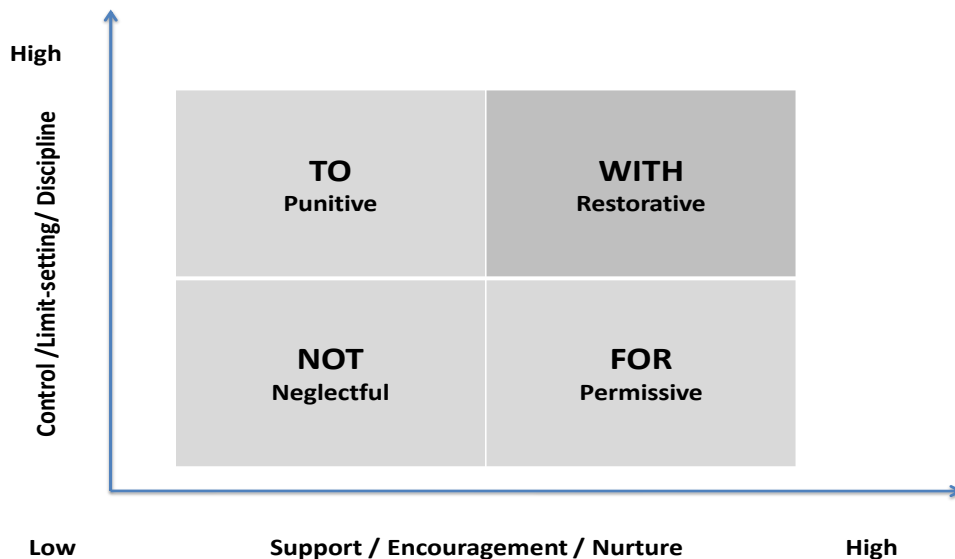
In their book *Teachers and Teaching*, Morrison and McIntyre (1969) discuss the use of sanctions in class. They refer to earlier research (for ex. Highfield & Pinset 1952, Kennedy & Wilcutt 1964, Kounin & Gump 1961) and state that teachers mainly using punishments have a weakening effect on the pupils' working morale and accomplishments. They also remark that punishments do not really work for pupils manifesting continued disturbing behaviour. It is likely that even if a punishment would work momentarily, its effects would not last long. On top of this, using punishments improves a sense of insecurity within the class and can even bring out hostility amongst the pupils. Using punishments may create an image of obedience and discipline, but it does not develop the pupils' self discipline and sense of responsibility. (Morrison & McIntyre 1971, 132-135.)

Belinda Hopkins (2006b) describes two different learning possibilities for pupils that depend on the approach that a teacher chooses in a conflict situation. First, she describes the traditional approach in a situation where a teacher meets a pupil in the corridor after he has been sent away from class, and acts as an authority. According to Hopkins, questions

posed by an authority are typically like the following: "Why are you here?", Why aren't you in class?", "What have you done?", "What harm have you caused this time?" etc. Hopkins sees that questions such as these, point to the pupil in such a way that he cannot see the effect his behaviour may have on the environment. Questions starting with the word "Why" often result in the need to defend one's actions and the only thing that the pupil learns is that it's better to not get caught in a similar situation, or it is best to learn to explain the situation in a way that oneself is presented in the best possible light, even if this means lying. Secondly, Hopkins describes practices in a restorative school where the teacher has already learned to apply restorative methods in a conflict situation. According to restorative thinking, the teacher sees a conflict as a learning situation and approaches the pupil standing outside the class room from this perspective. Instead of punishments, the teacher is interested in solutions and supports the pupil in considering the situation from the point of view of the whole class. The teacher listens, but doesn't rate the situation on any scale of true-false or good-bad. The teacher tries to reconnect the pupil with the community that he has been excluded from by supporting the pupil's own solutions affecting his behaviour in such a way that he is ready to return to class. The pupil learns to see the situation from the perspective of the whole class, thinks about whom his behaviour as affected and becomes empowered to change that behaviour in a more positive direction. Without punishments and stigmatisation, the pupil is ready to commit to a solution which allows him/her to return to class consolidated. (Hopkins 2006b, 29-33)

In their book *Restorative Justice Conferencing*, Ted Wachtel, Terry O'Connel and Ben Wachtel discuss the different methods of social discipline and order by using a social discipline window (diagram 2). According to their view, discipline means the relationship between control and support. The traditional punishment-focused discipline is based on strong control and minimal discipline. This equals an authority-approach in which activity is based on power over others (TO). On the other hand, a community can be too permissive one, where support is maximal and limits minimal. This means that activity is based on doing things too much for others (FOR). At the worst, a community's discipline can be completely indifferent which means minimal control and minimal support, and everyone is forced to make do as best they can (NOT). According to the writers' view, in a restorative community, discipline and order are based on cooperation (WITH). This means setting limits while also offering maximal support. Working together, the members of a community can participate in it and become responsible for it (Wachtel, O'Connell, Wachtel 2010, 228-

229.) The social discipline window allows us to look upon teaching, parenting and professionalism in different situations or even the different positions taken by the parties of conflict situation.

High

Control /Limit-setting / Discipline

TO Punitive	**WITH** Restorative
NOT Neglectful	**FOR** Permissive

Low   **Support / Encouragement / Nurture**   High

Wachtel & Mirsky 2008: The social discipline window

Diagram 2. The social discipline window (Wachtel & Mirsky 2008)

The social discipline window doesn't allow solutions merely for lessening disturbing behaviour, but directs educators in creating more positive school communities. Restorative practices develop the relationships between pupils, parents, teachers and the leading staff in a foreseeable way. When unwanted behaviour manifests, restorative practices induce participation and responsibility in the pupils instead of punishing them. (Wachtel & Mirsky 2008, s. XIII).

Belinda Hopkins (2006b) gives her view on what a restorative school is like. She claims that the ethics of justice and caring should be the basis of all activity in the school community. Hopkins (2006B, 28) states that school communities today face many challenges and that restorative thinking can support and get results in the following issues: the increase of safety and peace as well as the improvement of the school climate, the decrease of isolation and exclusion, a grown sense of community, an increased

participation, the decrease of bullying and other disturbing behaviour in the whole school community as well as the avoidance of exhaustion amongst the staff.

According to Norwegian headmaster Dag Hareide (2005), conflicts should be seen as challenging learning situations rather than as unwanted quarrel. Schools could act as places of social growth and learning also where conflict management and mediation skills are concerned as part of the learning of social skills and interaction which happens naturally in schools. It is really question of the goals set for the schools, rather than the teaching of information, and how the available resources are used and what kind of projects are prioritised.

According to Hareide, the school community can see three different bases for using peer mediation:

1. The pragmatic basis = Pupils have more time. Teachers can't be expected to solve all situations.
2. The educational basis = Pupils can learn while solving conflicts
3. The democratic basis = Pupils own their conflicts and they have a right to participate in solving them   (Hareide 2005, 121-138.)

In Finland, two methods of school mediation are used. These are peer mediation and adult-led mediation. Peer mediation as a method follows a clear pattern in which trained pupil mediators slightly older than the parties of a conflict help the parties to themselves find a solution to their conflict. During the mediation, the parties get to tell their side of the conflict, describe their feelings and think about different solutions to the conflict. The mediators have no power to give out punishments and they are bound to confidence. By following the pattern, the parties and the peer mediators reach the point of making an agreement, the keeping of which is secured by follow-up. The peer mediation method has been used in mediating conflicts rooted in name calling, yelling, harmful comments on someone's appearance, harmful comments on someone's answers in class, talking behind someone's back, spreading rumours, slapping, retaining, fights or play fights become too wild, pushing, threatening, forcing, oppressing, property violations or borrowing or hiding property without permission. (Gellin 2010, 70-71.)

In adult-led mediation two trained adult mediators or one adult and one pupil mediate a conflict that has taken place at the school. The mediated conflict is such that it cannot be mediated thorough peer mediation but it hasn't led to a criminal report being filed. The participation of parents and headmasters is very important in these situations. It is also highly important to see that the principles of mediation (i.e. that mediation is a voluntary and impartial method led in confidence and without punishments) and are realised in these situations. Often the schools have a security plan, in which mediation is stated as one method and where are also stated the criteria based on which mediation model is used in different situations. The conflicts that are referred to adult-led mediation are for example bullying cases that have been going on for long and that peer mediation hasn't been able to solve; property violations when financial compensation is also being discussed; conflicts between an adult or a teacher and a pupil or conflicts between an adult, a teacher or a headmaster and the parents. (Gellin 2010, 71.)

In case the school mediation methods used at a school do not result in an agreement, a given conflict can be handed on to be mediated by the local victim-offender (or community) mediation offices. Thus in using mediation as a method of conflict resolution, the school community is not a separate entity from the rest of the community, because when necessary, school conflicts can be mediated within the other cost-free mediation services of the society. If the crime has been committed at a school, the case can be referred to the mediation offices by for ex. the headmaster in accordance with the parents. In some criminal cases, the police refer the parties directly to mediation. When the suspect is a minor pupil, the parents always participate in the process. A mediation initiative is taken by contacting the local mediation offices, or if a criminal report has been filed, the police. (Gellin 2010, 71-72.)

What all the different levels of mediation have in common is the process that the mediation follows. The following diagram (Diagram 3) describes the different phases of the restorative mediation process.
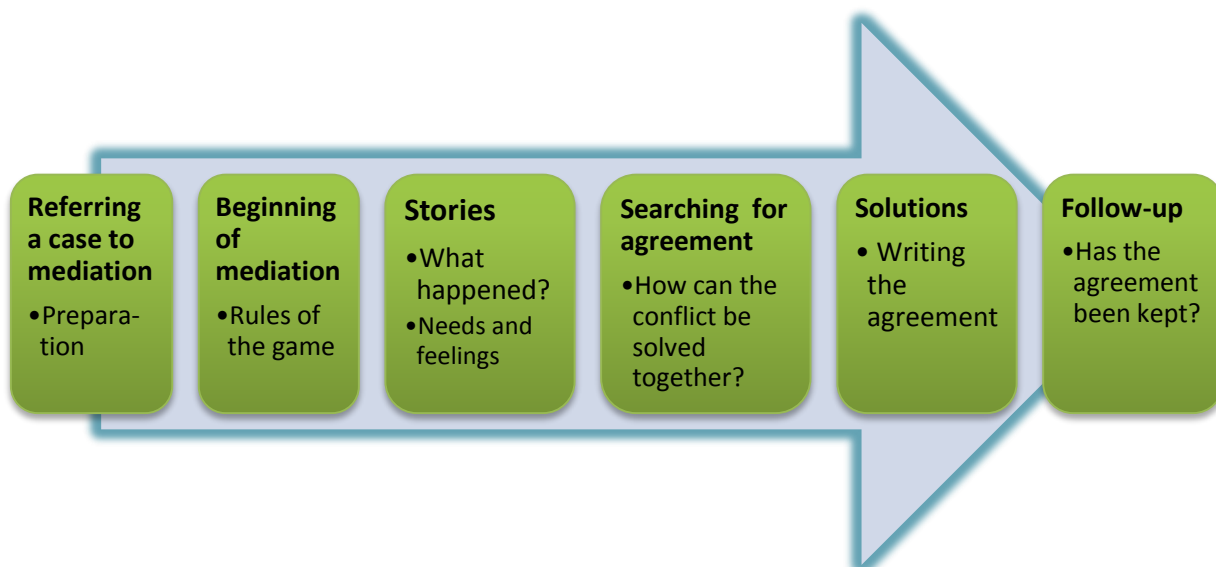
Diagram 3. Restorative mediation as a process (Gellin 2011)

4.2 Reflection, restorative approach and learning

Poikela (2010) associates reflection and restorativeness to learning in his article in the Finnish book on mediation *Sovittelu*. Poikela talks of restorative learning and divides this learning into two levels. Firstly, restorative learning takes place naturally in an individual's social context. A person's pervious experiences and education as well as possible trainings affect his ability to maintain and update his capabilities in constantly changing life situations. On this level, a person can maintain his focus and balance the relationship between himself and the environment. As the second level, Poikela sees a situation where an individual is lacking the first level capabilities and is thus in need of support and guidance. When a person's focus resources have been stagnated, he needs support in order to solve conflicts, make decisions, and regain balance between himself and the changing environment. (Poikela 2010, 229-300.) Reflection, which means the reassessing of one's learning and capabilities, is a means of maintaining and updating learning.

According to researcher Timo Pehrman (2009), mediation is an excellent situation for learning. He states that the mediation situation can be analysed by restorative thinking. Pehrman sees that the traditional way of conflict resolution i.e. setting punishments that are thought to scare people off from committing crimes or other harmful behaviour, limits or inhibits the possibility for learning. In mediation on the other hand, the participatory processing of the matter induces learning and helps the parties to change their behaviour

and the perpetrator is empowered to continue his/her activities as part of the society. (Pehrman 2009, 25-28.)

Restorative learning has much to do with reflection: by encounter and interaction we can learn to assess our behaviour in relation to others as well as in relation to the identity we would like to enhance. In his article *Oppimisen design* ("The Design of Learning", 2009) Poikela discusses the interaction between experience, reflection and learning. Poikela states that the core of learning is reflection which is the key to both directing activity and understanding the assessment. A concrete experience or observance is the starting point for learning, and reflection *on* action takes place in relation to reflection *in* action, i.e. behaviour and seen activity. Between observance and activity an understanding takes place, which is called reflection *for* action. Poikela emphasises the importance of reflection in all pases of learning. (Poikela 2009, 10-17.)

5. PUPILS AS SOURCE OF RESEARCH INFORMATION

It has been my purpose in this research to gain information on the peer mediators' experiences on mediation activity and to gather views on what skills can be gained through mediation. The research was conducted as surveys and the material was gathered by using a questionnaire which consisted of both claims and open questions. The survey thus produced both quantitative and qualitative material. The research questions can be summarised as the following:

The main research question:
1. What kind of learning does restorative mediation in schools produce?
Sub-questions:
1. How has peer mediation worked in the studied schools?
2. What have the actors of peer mediation learnt?

The survey for this research was conducted in the spring of 2009. The survey was directed at schools that had, to FFM's knowledge, been trained in peer mediation by the end of 2008. In choosing the sample, a proportionally representative amount of elementary-, secondary- and upper secondary schools were selected. In the end, all in all 30 schools

were chosen. From the 30 schools, between 2 and 25 answered questionnaires were received from trained peer mediators, and out of this number, a maximum of 6 questionnaires were chosen. In the final sample, gender distribution was also taken in consideration. After these operations, the final sample consisted of answers from 166 pupils acting as peer mediators whom I will henceforth call peer mediators. Not all 166 answered all questions and so each table contains answers from altogether 164 peer mediators. Out of the 164, 120 were pupils from elementary- and secondary school and 44 were pupils from upper secondary school. 85 of them were girls and 77 boys. The youngest pupils were 9 years old and the oldest 16 years old. The peer mediators were also asked how many cases they had mediated. Most (66 pupils) had mediated 1-5 cases, 38 pupils had mediated 11-15 cases 37 pupils had mediated 6-10 cases. 23 pupils said that they had mediated over 16 cases.

5.2 How well mediation works at the studied schools

"I almost feel proud of being part of something that works this well and to try and develop mediation techniques." (A peer mediator 2006)

Claims 2.1 – 2.5 concerned the parties' opinions on mediation and on acting as a mediator in general. The average of the answers to all these claims was above 4, so it can be concluded that the peer mediators considered mediation as a method that works and seems meaningful to them.

Claims 2.6 – 2.8 concerned the peer mediators' opinions on how well the school community knows the mediation method. A majority (78 %) agreed completely with the claim that the teachers know mediation well. Almost as many (73 %) felt that also the pupils know mediation. Answers to claim 2.8. were more diverse, since 21 % of peer mediators agreed completely and 36 % partially with the claim that teachers refer enough cases to mediation. However, 25 % of the peer mediators couldn't say, and 17 % of them disagreed completely or almost completely with the claim. It can thus be concluded that the peer mediation method is known at the schools but that more conflicts could be referred to it.

Claims 2.9 – 2.11 concerned the peer mediators' opinions on how the parties of the conflict experience the mediation. Discussion seems to have been very open during the mediations situations since more than half of the peer mediators agreed completely or partially with the claim. 83 % of the mediators felt they had been able to help the parties. However, almost half of the peer mediators felt that the parties didn't take mediation seriously. Based on these answers, it can be concluded that interaction has worked well in mediation and mediation has helped the parties. But the information of mediation as a pupil's right should be made clearer.

Almost all of the peer mediators (89 %) felt that all kinds of grief should be intervened in as early as possible. More than half (69 %) felt that mediation was important even in small conflicts, but 40 peer mediators couldn't say if they agreed with this or not. The peer mediators rather often saw situations that they felt were suitable for mediation, although the dispersion concerning this claim was rather significant (1,14). The result affirms the answers for claim 2.8 according to which teachers could refer more cases to mediation.

Claims 2.14, 2.15, 2.17 and 2.20 concerned the referral of conflicts to mediation. Many peer mediators (68 %) felt that mediation had helped to bring up conflict cases. However, 46 % of the peer mediators felt that the pupils didn't easily ask for mediation themselves. 42 % couldn't say if they agreed or not and 18 % of them felt that pupils did dare to ask for mediation themselves. There was dispersion (1,34) on the answers to claim 2.17 which showed that half (49 %) of the peer mediators had not themselves told the teacher about a conflict they had seen that would have been suitable for mediation. However, 22 % of the peer mediators had told the teacher about such situations. Interestingly enough, over half (54 %) felt that also conflicts between pupils and teachers could be mediated.

Claims 2.13, 2.18, 2.21 and 2.22 concerned how well mediation had settled into the school community. The peer mediators felt that the adults guiding the mediation activity supported it well (average 4,46). Peer mediation had become a part of the school general practices (average 4,31). More than half (57 %) felt that mediation could be used to solve all of the pupils' disputes. Half (50 %) agreed that mediation abilities could also be used during their free time. However, 36 % of the peer mediators couldn't say if this was so. As a whole, the answers to these claims reflect a positive attitude towards how the mediation activity has become a part of the schools' practices.

Based on the answers to the claims, it can be concluded that the peer mediation method works well at the schools and that the peer mediators are capable mediators. The parties have received the help they have needed and the mediation method has helped in bringing conflict cases to the light. As a challenge can be seen increasing respect and appreciation for mediation within the school community. The parties' attitude, the referral of cases to mediation by the pupils themselves as well as the teachers, also leaves room for improvement. In spite of the good results, accurate information on the mediation method should always be given and the pupils' right to choose whether they want to take part in it or not should always be valued and emphasised. The mediation method gives good results, but there are still negative attitudes limiting or inhibiting its use. The pupils' participation needs to be understood more profoundly as part of the schools resources even in difficult situations. Also, the pupils themselves need to acknowledge their rights better in order to properly appreciate their own expert-knowledge of their community.

5.3 Learning experiences produced by peer mediation

"*I have learned to respect others and I have also become more social*" (A peer mediator 2009)

There were two open questions in the questionnaire sent to peer mediators:
1. What have you learnt as a peer mediator?
2. What do you think the parties of the mediation have learnt?

The rubric of these questions was also formulated as a question, and a part of the pupils answered it even though there wasn't a lot of room for answering. Therefore, some answers were also received to the question: What is learnt in mediation?

The answers gained consisted of altogether 430 original expressions out of which 132 were from pupils in upper secondary school and 298 from pupils in elementary- and secondary school. The original expressions consisted of one-word expressions, phrases or sentences, that could include many opinions. All questions were answered by expressions that described 18 different sub-skills learnt in mediation. The question on learning as a

peer mediator was also answered with four other expressions and the question on the parties' learning was answered whit five other expressions.

Out of the 430 expressions only 20 maintained that nothing is learnt in mediation. This constitutes as such a small portion of the total that it doesn't have a significant effect on the research results. These were one-word expressions such as "nothing" and don't' really allow for analysis on the reasons for this negative view. Only three expressions lifted up real shortcomings: ”Nothing, because they only laugh there and don't take it seriously", "but sometimes people just can't stop", "the first-class pupils don't take it seriously".

After this, the themes from the chosen learning theories were matched with the expressions from the answers. This produced a category of main skills, which express learning experiences produced by restorative mediation. (Table 1).

Table 1. Main skills learnt through mediation as produced by the qualitative analysis of the material (Gellin 2011)

Sub-skills	Main skills
To solve conflicts To mediate To talk and discuss Forgiving and asking for forgiveness Relationship skills To listen Social skills	**Social skills** i.e. competences in a social situation
To understand arguments To understand mediation To respect others To understand others Equality Differences	**Empathy** i.e. understanding of the situation and the parties' different views
Responsibility To not argue Self discipline- and control To not bully To behave politely and in a well mannered way	**Responsibility** For one's own behaviour
To help Skills for free time Impartiality Patience Honesty Thinking about things	**Capability** i.e. competences enhancing personal capability
Participation	**Active citizenship** i.e. capability to make a difference by participating

6. WHAT KIND OF LEARNING RESTORATIVE PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS PRODUCES?

"We have learnt good skills for our future marriages." (A peer mediator 2009)

In order to deepen my understanding of the results of the analysis, I looked at this category of main skills in relation to each learning theory in my theoretical context. The cycle of learning through experience by Johnson & Johnson (2009) goes from choosing an action to understanding the consequences through feed-back which, through reflection, leads to forming a new way of behaving. The new way of behaving replaces the old one and becomes the chosen action as the cycle recommences. The concept of learning in mediation as produced by my research can be interpreted from the perspective of learning through experience. Mediation commences when a person's chosen activity i.e. behaviour has caused harm in the environment. In the mediation situation, the person gets feed-back on his actions and understands the consequences of it. The interaction, dialogue and reflection lead to forming a new way of behaving which is even written down in the contract, which then enhances the person's ability to resort to the new behaviour in a corresponding situation.

Isaacs (1999) for his part, sees the skills learnt in dialogue as closely related to the phases of dialogue which are listening, respect, waiting and direct talk. These are related to the four principles of dialogue: participation, coherence, awareness and manifestation. This dialogue theory also works for analysing the results of my research. The mediation situation commences when the parties voluntarily wish to participate in dealing with the situation. This participation enables both of the parties to listen to each other. Mediation is based on the principles of impartiality, confidentiality and searching of solutions and it is the mediator's task to see to it that all parties are heard. It is a part of the role and the professionalism of the mediator to respect both the parties and to support them in enhancing their own understanding in such a way that their needs are seen coherently. The equality shown by the mediator also helps the parties to respect each others' views. During the listening and waiting for one's turn, the parties' awareness of the situation is increased, and when it is their turn to talk (direct talk), they can express their view comprehensively. The direct talk continues into interaction which ends in writing down an agreement.

The feeling of capability related to social learning (Helkama et al. 2005) is an interesting phenomenon when looking at the motivation born in restorative mediation to change one's behaviour and take responsibility in such a way that one's actions become different in the future. The parties often come to the mediation situation with the understanding that something has happened which has led to an unpleasant feeling. During mediation, through listening and reflection, the parties can form an understanding of one's own behaviour and its consequences, and through empathy and understanding of the other they can then gain the motivation to change their social behaviour. At the same time, as the mediators are peers, they can act as role models to which the parties can compare their own capability to. The shared discussion can also produce an abstract role model, to which all those present in mediation bring their part and finally accept. This model works as a solution based on which the promises made are written down in the contract. From the perspective of social learning, the follow-up of the mediation method bears great importance. In the follow-up situation, the parties can gain positive feed-back on their changed behaviour. Also the people close to the parties can actively encourage the parties when seeing bettered behaviour, even though they don't know what has been written in the contract. From the point of view of social learning, this positive feed-back works as such an experience of success that it affects the parties' feeling of capability.

Poikela (2009) emphasises the importance of reflection. In the learning experiences described by the peer mediators, reflection can be seen as having upmost significance. A person has come to mediation because of a situation that has become a conflict. The behaviour causing the conflict has been active and has included more or less of reflection *in* action. The action creates a concrete experience when the person realises, through reflection, what has happened. From a mediation perspective, the person realises his participation in the conflict. When a conflict is referred to mediation, an occasion is given to those present for reflection as it is understood in the reflective learning theory. Both the parties and the mediator take part in the reflection which in turn enhances the parties' reflective observing. This reflective interaction that takes place after the action, leads to understanding. The searching for a common agreement and making a contract based on it, can be described by abstract conceptualisation which acts as reflection *for* action and leads to renewed behaviour.

If we then look at the learning that takes place in restorative mediation, as shown by my research, it is good to resort to the concept of restorative approach in environmental

psychology. (Poikela 2010). According to environmental psychology, a restorative environment optimises a person's ability for focus. A restorative experience can take place when four elements are realised in the environment: secession, well-being, space and harmony. Keeping these in mind, we have reason to look at the understanding of the demands for restorative mediation that the pupils' survey answers show. Based on the results, we can say that according to peer mediators, encounter, participation, cooperation and result-orientation create a motivated space where mediation can succeed. At the same time, we can state that mediation as an environment allows the learning of encounter, participation, collaboration and resolution. Based on the four elements of restorative experience, we can state that when a conflict takes place in the everyday life of the school, it is of great importance to transfer it (secession) to an agreed space. Part of the well-being in that space comes from the mediators' ability, learnt in the mediation training, to create an impartial and non-incriminating interaction. Another factor of well-being, shown also in the peer mediators' survey answers, was the absence of adults during the conflict resolution. Space can be seen abstractedly as the possibility to share one's views and discuss the situation without fear of punishments during mediation. A true agreement takes place in the common understanding in finding a solution to the conflict and is concretised in the written agreement, which then embodies a feeling of compensation and a positive outcome of the situation.

The next table (Table 2) summarises the phases, contents and results of restorative learning in peer mediation.

Table 2. A summary of the phases, contents and results of restorative learning in peer mediation (Gellin 2011)

The characteristics of restorative environment/space	The social manifestations of restorative learning	The results produced by restorative learning
Participation Encounter face to face Cooperation Resolution	Listening Respect Dialogue Interaction Reflection Understanding Needs Thoughts Feelings Actions	Empathy Social skills Sense of responsibility Capability Active citizenship

6.2 Restorative learning

As a whole, on the basis of this research, it can be stated that a restorative approach enables individuals and communities to improve their social skills, strengthens individuals' identity and enhances the well-being in society. A restorative school exercises the values of both restorative thinking and the laws and settings of the curriculum as well as creates practices with which these values can be taught and learnt. The peer mediators' answers to the survey claims show mediation as a method that works and that should be more used in the schools. The challenge of peer mediation as shown by the answers is informing the whole school community about mediation so comprehensively that it adopts mediation as a central method of enhancing participation and responsibility taking. The peer mediators felt that conflicts should be intervened in as early as possible, because they felt that they could really help the parties by mediation. The peer mediators' positive view on the results of mediation informs us clearly of how important resource the pupils are in securing peace at schools and that their participation should be valued. With more appreciation and positive informing, the pupils could themselves become more encouraged to refer cases to mediation, which in light of this research showed itself as another challenge for the school mediation activity. From mediation's perspective, restorative approach materialises through the acknowledgement of the pupils' expertise and capability as well as an enhanced interaction and increase of cooperation in the whole school community.

The analysis of the research results through the presented learning theories created a new image of restorative learning which can be seen as closely related with theories of cooperative learning, social learning, dialogue and reflection. With the help of the chosen theories, took shape the themes that make learning into a restorative practice. These themes are:

1.   The characteristics of restorative environment/space
2.   The social manifestations of restorative learning
3.   The results produced by restorative learning

The characteristics of a restorative environment are participation, meaning the parties understanding of their own participation in the situation they are in, and the voluntary motivation to influence in the resolution of the conflict. Participation takes place in the encounter face to face, which is a central element of restorative mediation. Participation and encounter create the conditions for true cooperation which, instead of dealing sanctions, aims at finding solutions.

The social manifestations of restorative learning can be seen in the different phases of the mediation process. Actions, thoughts, feelings and needs are reflected on together by listening and discussion. The understanding of the above creates a ground of mutual respect, which allows for the understanding of the importance of one's own actions, the searching of agreement and finding solutions.

The mediation process creates the conditions for restorative learning and produces learning experiences which lead to results of learning. Interaction and understanding enhance empathy, i.e. the capacity to see the situation from the point of view of another person. At the same time, discussion and dialogue enhance the parties' social skills i.e. their capability to together produce positive solutions and new ways of behaving. The solutions produce promises of changing behaviour, to which the parties then commit through the agreement. This in turn allows for the taking of responsibility. During the follow-up phases, a kept agreement, the encouragement and positive feed-back from the environment induce a feeling of capability. At its best, this feeling of capability leads to an experience of participation as active citizenship, which is shown by the peer mediators' views on using mediation also during their free time.

The results of my research are summarised in the following diagram (Diagram 4.). The diagram discerns restorative learning in mediation as I have understood it in light of this research. The circle in the middle of the diagram is divided into four parts and it describes the different phases of mediation; the names of phases are written in capital letters and the themes of these phases in normal writing. In the square of each corner of the diagram are indicated the learning phases taking place in each phase of the mediation process. Reflection is used in each part of the restorative learning activity that the mediation process embodies.

STORIES
Listening

NEEDS
Understanding

Reflection   Reflection

Reflection   Reflection

SOLUTIONS
Responsibility

SEARCHING FOR AGREEMENT
Dialogue

- **Participation**
- **Encounter**
- **Cooperation**
- **Finding solutions**
  =Restorative space or environment

- **Respect**
- **Accepting difference**
- **Verbalising thoughts and feelings**
  •=Social manifestations of restorative learning

- **Empathy**
- **Capability**
- **Social skills**
- **Aktive citizenship**
  = The results produced by restorative learning

- **Self-reflection**
- **Interaction**
- **Dialogue**
- **Verbalisation**
- **Actions**
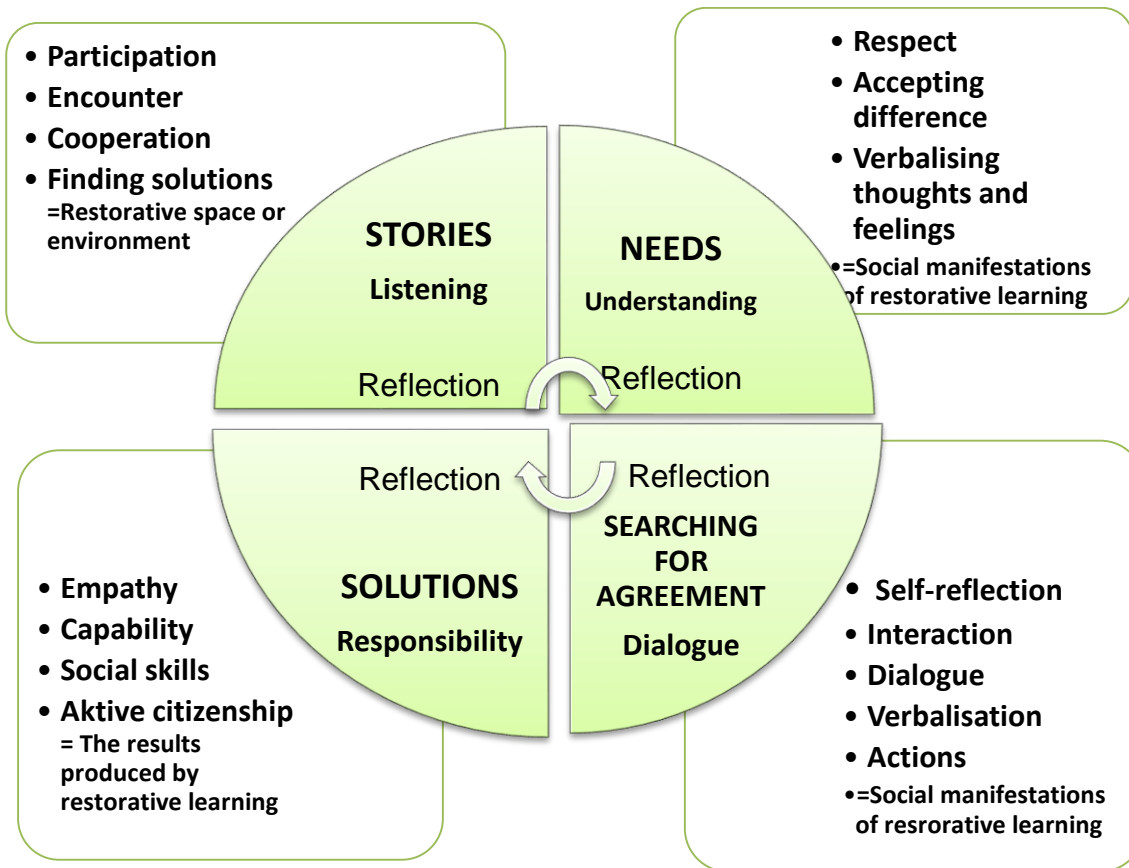 •=Social manifestations of resrorative learning

Diagram 4. Restorative learning in peer mediation (Gellin 2011)

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