



## **Restorative Skills for the Workplace with Construction Students at Truro College**

In May 2022 we ran our **Restorative Skills for the Workplace** programme with Construction Students at Truro College.

*“I learnt how easy it is to resolve situations that impact on me and others. This has helped me understand how to handle intense situations at the workplace / college / socially”*

### **The Programme:**

This programme for young people aged 16-25 was developed in light of the impact of covid on young people's opportunities to develop and practice their social and emotional skills. The programme focuses on the 'people' side of the workplace and uses Restorative Approaches to support students to develop skills, language and tools to support them in employment situations. This training is specific to the Cornish context, using a series of short films commissioned and made in Cornwall. The sessions draw on real life workplace scenarios and focus on the development of social and emotional competencies which are very transferable, and will serve young people well in all manner of employment, training and personal relationship contexts.

### **What the students told us:**

*“I enjoyed the videos. I could understand how to behave in a job”*

*“I learnt about how to deal with an employer”*

*“The facilitators helped everyone get their points across and has treated everyone with respect”*

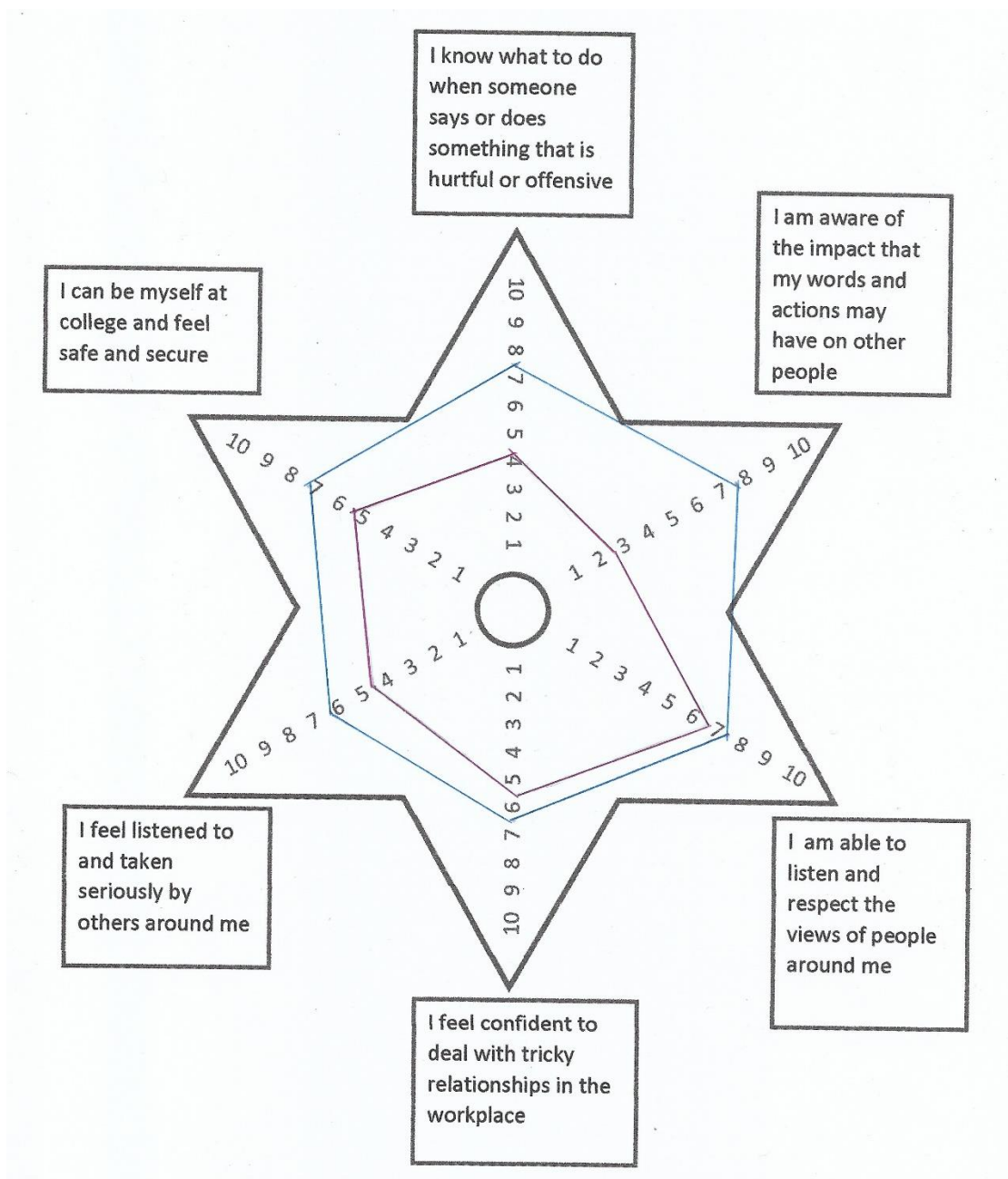
*“I learnt a lot of different feeling words”*

*“I learnt about listening to people's feelings, listening to people's thoughts”*

*“I learnt how to really think about my feelings, learning how to deal with situations that involve conflict, and who I can talk to if I was ever in bad situations”*

We conducted a star evaluation at the beginning and end of the pilot, asking learners to reflect on and rate from 1-10 how they felt in relation to a number of statements about their social and

emotional competencies (with 10 being totally true, and 1 being not true at all). The results show that after completing the programme, learners felt stronger, more skilled and confident in every area. The purple line shows how learners felt on average at the beginning of the programme, and the blue line shows how learners felt on average at the end of the programme. The biggest shift was in increased awareness of the impact of words and actions on other people.





### **What the staff told us:**

#### **Testimonial from Paul Crawford, Plastering Lecturer**

"Working with Lucy Pearson and Cora Pollard from RJ Working on a pilot scheme for Restorative Practice over three sessions with the Construction skills learners was a valuable learning experience for me and the learners.

I have been in the fortunate position to witness the impact of these session on learners' behaviours and interactions. Conflict between learners arises occasionally in classroom and practical workshop situations. Quite often I am forced to intervene and act as mediator to help learners resolve their issues.

Recently, I have witnessed learners who have taken part accessing the restorative skills and tools when dealing with difficult situations. They have been able to deal with conflict in a more constructive way, resulting in positive outcomes, without too much intervention from me. I believe this is a direct result of having engaged in the Restorative Practise sessions with Lucy and Cora.

We are all too aware that learners, having spent so long in lockdown, have missed several educational experiences. The social and emotional development that face-to-face interaction allows has been missed by learners too. This has resulted in many learners being unable to develop the confidence, necessary skills and resilience needed to navigate everyday social interactions in the classroom and workplace.

RJ Working are able target this need, among others, with their Restorative Practice sessions. These sessions help young people develop the necessary skills and build the resilience that are so important in today's Further Educational environment and future destinations, including the workplace.

The Restorative Practice sessions are delivered in such a way that they afford effective team building opportunities and lend themselves very well to developing employability skills and support behavioural management strategies. As the sessions progress learners will develop their emotional intelligence and empathic abilities, enabling them to engage more in the learning process and spend less time and energy engaged in off task or disruptive behaviours.

Personally, I have benefited from taking part in the pilot scheme and working with Lucy and Cora. I have been able to look at disruptive behaviour and conflict through a different lens. This has enabled me to deal with learners challenging behaviour in a more constructive and positive way, leading to better outcomes for the learner, myself, and the group. I hope to develop the skills I have learnt in the Restorative Practice sessions and use them in my future practice"