

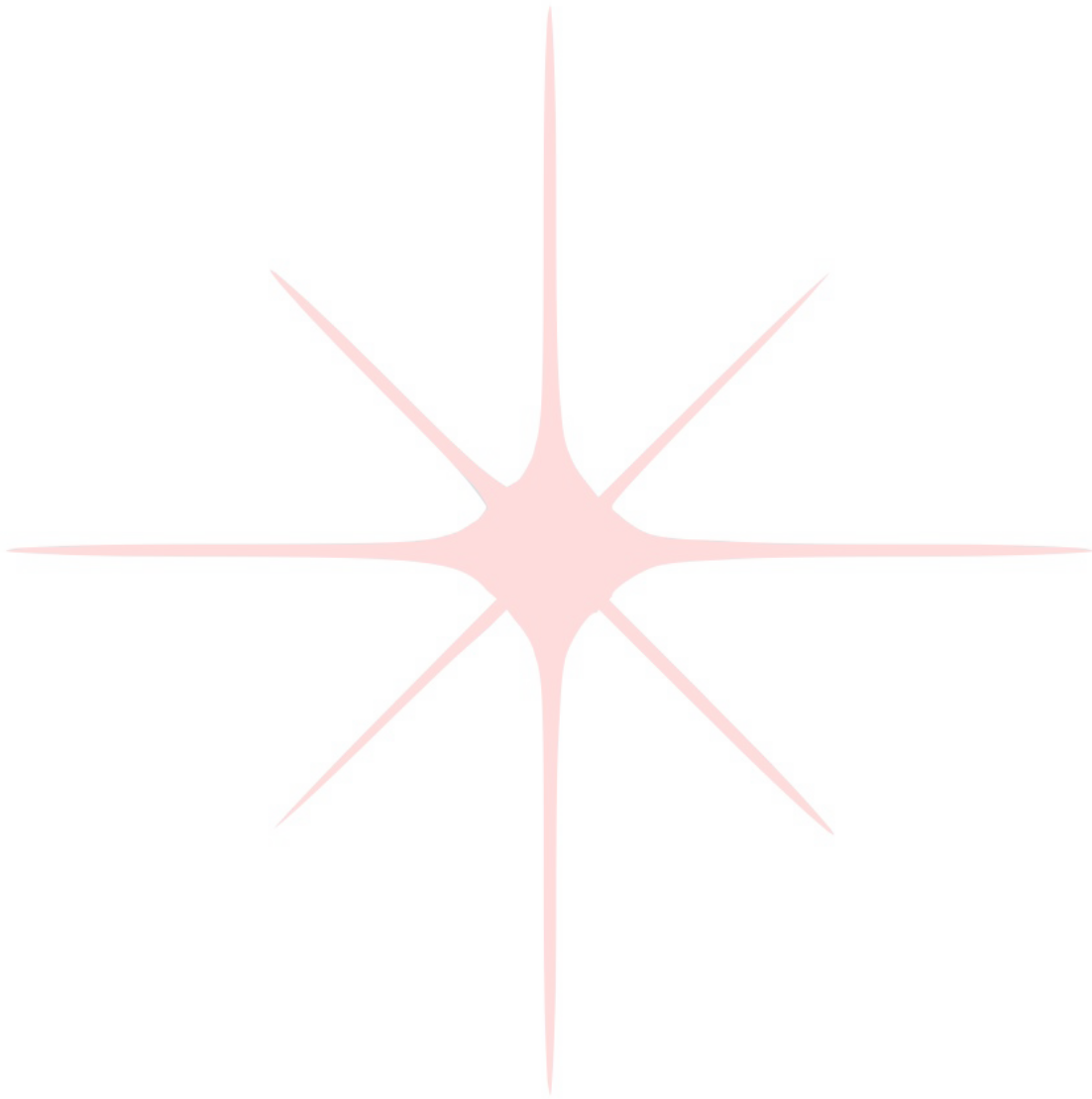


Restoring Balance:

*A guide to classroom
management and behavior.*

By Damian Charpentier







Restoring Balance To Our Classrooms:

Purpose of this Handbook...

This handbook helps teachers strengthen classroom management through reflection, individualized approaches, and consistent adherence to student guidelines. It focuses on de-escalation, restorative practices, flexibility for individual needs, and the power of a clean slate with students.



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Section 1: Understanding Your Classroom Ecosystem

Purpose

To help teachers analyze how classroom dynamics, environment, and expectations affect student behavior and to recognize how their own responses shape the tone of learning. This section emphasizes reflection and proactive structure rather than reaction.

Core Concept: The Classroom as an Ecosystem

A classroom is a living system each part (teacher, students, routines, environment) affects the others.

Just as in nature, balance leads to growth; imbalance creates tension.

Ecosystem Element	Description	Reflection Question
Climate	The emotional “temperature” of the classroom is it calm, welcoming, and predictable?	How do students feel when they walk into my classroom?
Routines	Predictable structures that build security and consistency.	Are my routines clear and practiced, or do they rely on reminders?
Relationships	The trust between teacher and students.	Have I built rapport before enforcing rules?
Rules & Boundaries	Agreed-upon guidelines for respect and accountability.	Do my rules align with the Student Guidelines? Are they enforced consistently?
Teacher Response	The tone, body language, and follow-through of the teacher.	How do I react when I’m frustrated? Do I model self-control?

The “3R” Model: Root, Reaction, Reflection

A quick lens teachers can use when managing behavior.

Stage	Focus	Example
Root	Identify the cause behind the behavior.	“This student interrupts often could it be a need for attention or understanding?”
Reaction	Manage your immediate response using calm tone and posture.	“Take a deep breath before responding; don’t mirror the emotion.”
Reflection	Evaluate the effectiveness of your action and student response afterward.	“What did I do that helped or hindered de-escalation?”



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Section 2: De-Escalation and Respect

The CALM Framework helps teachers in de-escalating student behavior:

The CALM Framework

Step	Description	Example Language	Why It Works
C – Center Yourself	Take a breath. Notice your tone, posture, and facial expression before you respond.	“I’m going to take a moment so we can both calm down.”	Prevents emotional contagion; models self-regulation.
A – Acknowledge Emotion	Name what you see to defuse intensity and show empathy.	“I can see you’re frustrated.” / “It sounds like you felt that was unfair.”	Validates feelings without approving the behavior.
L – Lower the Stakes	Shift the focus from confrontation to resolution. Avoid public power struggles.	“Let’s step outside for a quick talk.” / “You can take a minute, and we’ll continue when you’re ready.”	Restores privacy and safety; gives students agency.
M – Move Forward	Transition toward task or solution once emotions settle.	“Let’s get back to finishing your project.” / “I appreciate you calming down; let’s move on.”	Reinforces recovery and responsibility rather than punishment.

Body Language and Environmental Tips

- Maintain open posture (no crossed arms or pointing).
- Keep voice low and steady; volume signals control.
- Move slowly quick movement can heighten tension.
- Use proximity: standing near a disruptive student calmly can redirect behavior without confrontation.
- Arrange classroom space so movement feels safe and non-threatening (avoid corners or blocked exits).

When De-Escalation Doesn't Work

If a situation continues to escalate:

- Ensure safety first use calm directives (“Step outside,” “Please move to the hall for a minute”).
- Seek assistance (another teacher, Dean, or counselor).
- Document incident facts only no emotional or subjective language.
- Follow up with a restorative conversation within 24 hours.



Mini-Reflection Prompts for Teachers

After an incident, take 2 minutes to jot:

- What was the trigger?
- How did I respond emotionally?
- What worked? What didn't?
- What will I try next time?

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Section 3: Restorative Practices & Clean Slate Thinking

Purpose

To help teachers replace purely punitive responses with restorative ones that promote accountability, empathy, and positive reintegration.

The goal is not to excuse behavior, but to repair harm and rebuild trust within the learning community.

Understanding Restorative Practice

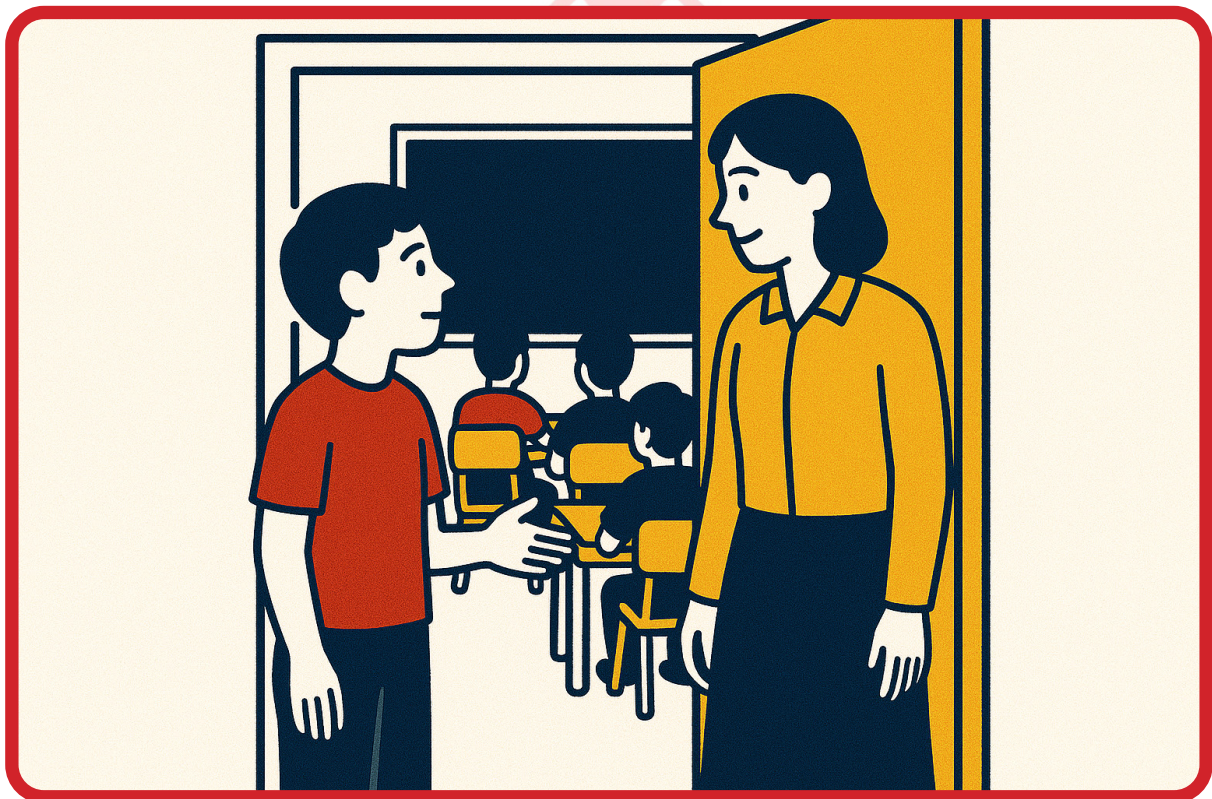
Restorative Practice shifts our questioning from;

“What rule was broken, and what is the punishment?”

To;

“Who was harmed and who was effected, and how can we make it right?”

This philosophy focuses on healing relationships and empowering students to take responsibility for their actions.



Core Principals

Principle	Explanation	Example in Classroom
Accountability	Students must recognize how their behavior affects others.	“Your actions disrupted learning how can we fix that together?”
Empathy	Both teacher and student seek to understand feelings and perspectives.	“How do you think your classmate felt when that happened?”
Repair	Encourage meaningful actions that rebuild trust or restore order.	“Can you write a note of apology or assist with the next class activity?”
Reintegration	Every student deserves a chance to rejoin the community without stigma.	“Tomorrow is a new day; let’s start fresh.”

The Restorative Conversation (Step-by-Step)

Step	Teacher Prompts	Objective
Calm the Setting	“Let’s take a few minutes to talk privately.”	Remove the audience; reduce tension.
Open with Neutral Tone	“I want to understand what happened, not to punish.”	Establish safety and fairness.
Invite Storytelling	“Tell me what happened from your point of view.”	Allow student voice and self-expression.
Explore Impact	“Who was affected by what happened, and how?”	Build empathy and awareness.
Plan Repair	“What can be done to make things right?”	Encourage ownership and solution-thinking.
Clean Slate Commitment	“Tomorrow we move forward. Let’s both try again.”	Reinstate belonging and hope.

Section 4: Reflection and Action Planning

Purpose

To help teachers move from theory to practice by identifying specific goals, strategies, and support systems for improving classroom management and restorative communication.

Reflection transforms experience into growth this section turns insight into daily habits.

Core Concept: The Reflection Loop

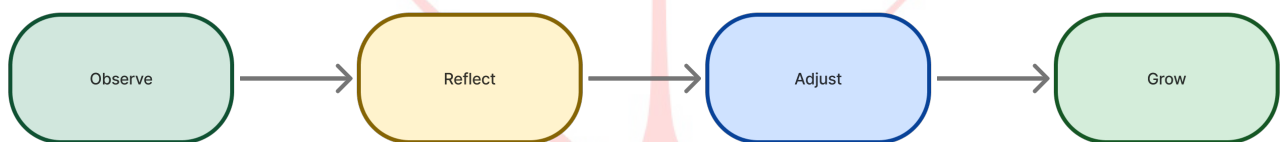
Experience – Recognize a real classroom challenge.

Analysis – Understand what happened and why.

Adjustment – Plan a new strategy using CALM or restorative steps.

Action – Implement it in class.

Review – Reflect and record the results with a peer or coach.



Individual Reflection Prompts

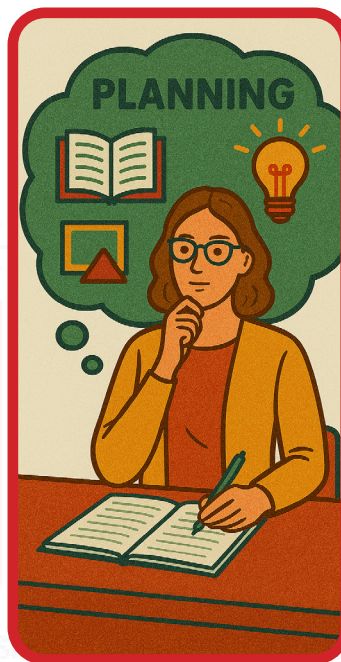
- You may consider your own reflective prompts, personalizing them to the specific situation if it is a minor infraction to our school's policies.
- Always confer any reflective prompts with your Principal's office or DoS.
- Remember that there are restorative practices listed in our policies and these policies must be used on infractions of middle to high frequency or severity.
- Be encouraged to be consistent and follow through with checking on completed prompts as well as check-ins with students who have successfully returned to class or have completed any tasks asked of them when dealing with any disciplinary action.



Classroom Management Action Plan

Each teacher develops a personal plan aligned with school policy and restorative philosophy.

Action Categories
Area of Interest/Improvement
Current Practice
New Strategy
Support Needed
Timeline
Evidence of Progress



Topics
Student Relationships
Rule Reinforcement
De-Escalation
Restorative Follow-Up
Parent Communication

Peer Coaching and Accountability

This provides teachers with a system of follow-up reflection.

Coaching Cycle Stage	Description	Example
Check-in	Identify one challenge and goal.	"I want to improve my redirection language with disruptive students."
Observe & Support	A peer or leader observes and provides short, descriptive feedback.	"You kept your tone steady consider pausing slightly longer."
Reflect & Adjust	Review progress, refine the strategy, and set next steps.	"I'll try using acknowledgment statements before redirection next week."
Celebrate	Recognize progress publicly or privately.	"You handled that tough class calmly — that's growth!"

Clean Slate Review:

All students must be given a clear chance for improvement, within the limits of our policies, any student returning to your class must be given a clean slate. This applies to incidents that pass, daily, weekly, and each trimester.



"Every great teacher doesn't avoid the storm, they learn how to bring calm to it, within the classroom."



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