

Peace Literacy Worksheet: Understanding and Healing Aggression 1

Name/date _____

After watching the film clip of Paul K. Chappell, answer this question:

According to Chappell, why should we not be surprised at the level of violence in the world?

Empathy Exercise 1 (Practicing empathy for yourself – you won't be asked to share this)

Write down 1 or 2 things that are nagging at you in the background, lingering worries or concerns that have nothing directly to do with this class but might affect your learning today:

- Bringing these issues to conscious attention is called mindfulness.
- Read over the concerns you've listed—don't make a judgment about whether the concerns are good or bad, reasonable or unreasonable, they are **human** concerns.
- This exercise won't get rid of those intrusive thoughts, but by noticing them they are less likely to have an effect—they won't surprise you.
- And when these concerns come back, which they might, perhaps several times during this class, you can recognize them now as old friends: "oh look, here is some anxiety again."
- This recognition is self-compassion, which means having empathy for yourself
- It helps you to be kind to yourself.
- It is not easy being human – cut yourself some slack!
- If this seems difficult, remember that you can gradually get better at this, just like you can gradually get better at anything through learning and practice.
- Practice doing this on your own at the start of each class, and **remember that everyone in the class is having their own struggles!**

Aggression is like the heat emitted from a fire.

- The fire is a metaphor for pain or discomfort that can cause aggression.
- People don't become aggressive because they feel good.

Fill in the blank (sharing your answers with the class is optional)

Some of the metaphorical fires (forms of pain or discomfort) that can cause me or other people to feel the heat of aggression include (list emotions or feelings):

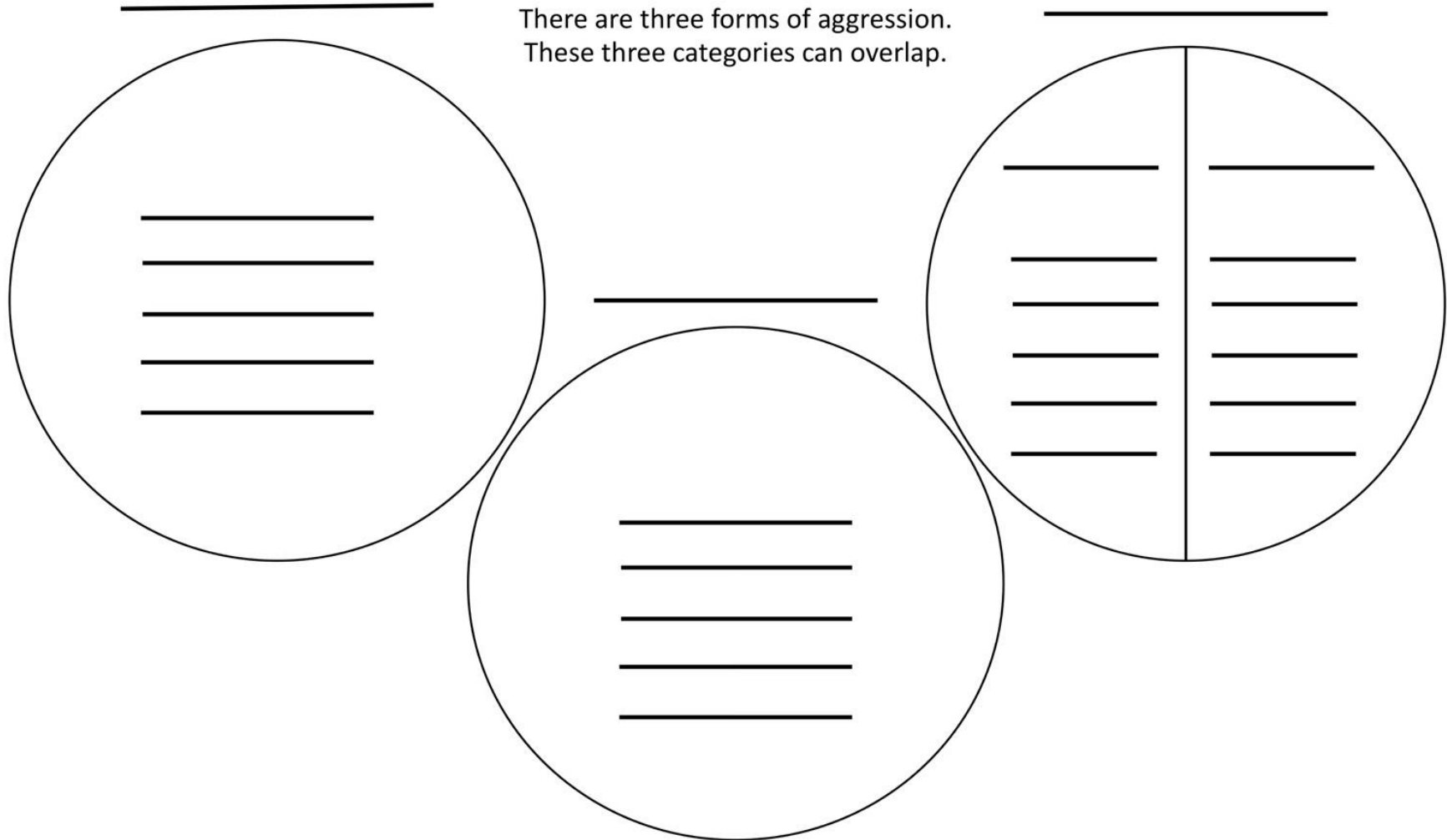
Fill in the blank (sharing your answers with the class is optional)

Some of the ways that I have expressed aggression, or seen other people express aggression, include (list actions):

Start filling in the blanks as you follow the lecture:

The Anatomy of Aggression

There are three forms of aggression.
These three categories can overlap.



What is the Universal Human Phobia?

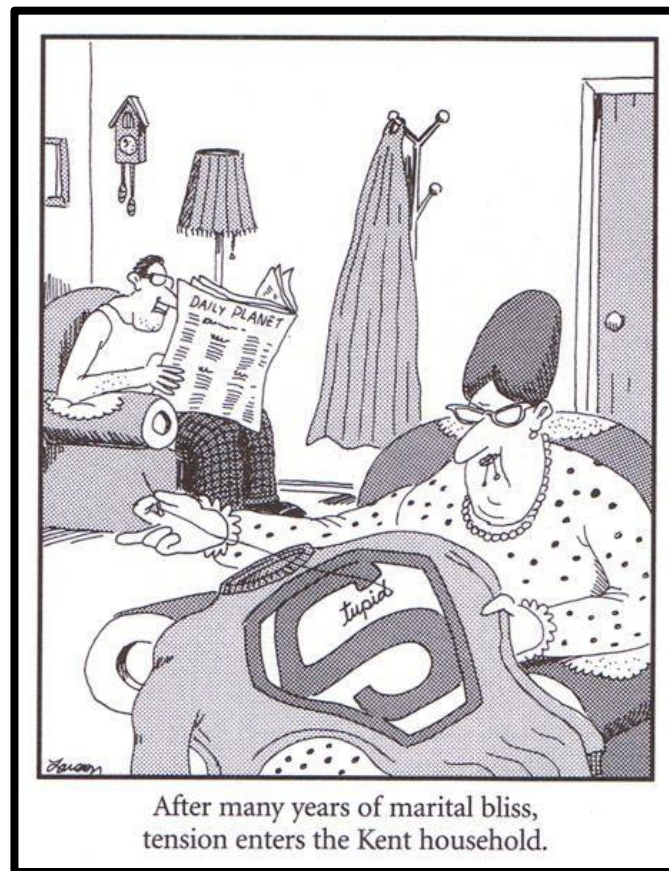
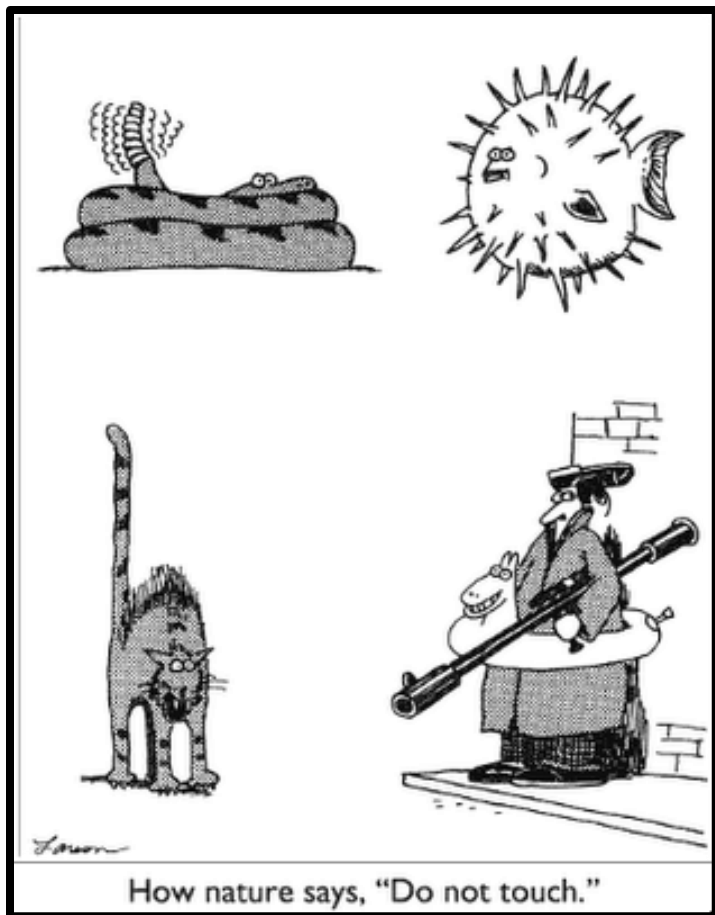
Every year in America tens of thousands die in car accidents, but every day millions of people drive casually to work. However, a few murders by a serial killer can cause a city to go on alert, striking terror in many of its citizens. The September 11 attacks, even though they killed far fewer people than car accidents and smoking related deaths annually, created so much fear that our country has never been the same since.

In an article in The Atlantic titled “Americans Are as Likely to Be Killed by Their Own Furniture as by Terrorism,” Micah Zenko wrote: “Of the 13,288 people killed by terrorist attacks [around the world] last year [2011], seventeen were private U.S. citizens, or .001 percent ... The number of U.S. citizens who died in terrorist attacks increased by two between 2010 and 2011; overall, a comparable number of Americans are crushed to death by their televisions or furniture each year. This is not to diminish the real—albeit shrinking—threat of terrorism, or to minimize the loss and suffering of the 13,000 killed and over 45,000 injured around the world. For Americans, however, it should emphasize that an irrational fear of terrorism is both unwarranted and a poor basis for public policy decisions.”

*The death of every person killed by terrorism is tragic, yet if fifteen thousand Americans were killed by terrorism every year (a thousand times the fifteen Americans killed in 2010), this would still be less than half the number of Americans killed in car accidents annually (usually between thirty and forty thousand). From Paul K. Chappell **The Cosmic Ocean**, 2015 pp. 212-213.*

*This is one of the primary reasons why the early, clumsy, smoothbore, muzzleloading muskets replaced the longbow and the crossbow. The longbow and the crossbow had many times the rate of fire, more accuracy and far greater accurate range when compared to the early smoothbore muskets. Yet these superior military weapons were replaced, almost overnight (historically speaking) by vastly inferior muskets. While they were inferior at killing, they were not inferior at psychologically stunning and daunting an opponent . . . If you are in a battle going doink, doink with a crossbow and the other guy is going Boom! Boom! with a musket, all things being equal, the doinker will lose every time. From Grossman quoted in **The Cosmic Ocean**, 2015 p. 64.*

What kind of aggression is being depicted in the cartoon to the right?



What kind of aggression is being depicted in the cartoon to the left?

Questions after watching the Key and Peel video:

What were some of the fires causing the heat of the bully’s aggression?

What were some of the fires causing the heat of his father’s aggression?

Lesson Summary: Healthier Ways to Deal with Pain/Discomfort

- All aggression is caused by distress (pain/discomfort).
- But not all pain/discomfort has to lead to aggression.
- We can use Peace Literacy which gives us a larger range of options/skills.

Key step: Seeing aggression as fear or some other kind of distress requires *empathy*.

- We can exercise our empathy so we can recognize when we or others are in distress.
 - **In others:** When we empathetically see the fire beneath the aggression of **others**, this allows us to have even **more** empathy for them which can expand our options for responding effectively.
 - We might not know the specific fires they’re dealing with, but we can recognize that they’re in distress of some kind.
 - **In ourselves:** When we see the fire beneath **our own** aggression, we can learn how to deal with the fire rather than just lashing out with aggression.



Empathy Exercise 2 (empathy for others)

You won’t share this with anyone. Think about someone you know who is struggling (don’t write their name), and list 1 or 2 kinds of distress (emotions) they might be feeling.

Peace Literacy Worksheet: Understanding and Healing Aggression 2

Name/date _____

Empathy Exercise 1 (Practicing empathy for yourself – you won't be asked to share this)

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- Read over the concerns you've listed—don't make a judgment about whether the concerns are good or bad, reasonable or unreasonable, they are **human** concerns.
- This exercise won't get rid of those intrusive thoughts, but by noticing them they are less likely to have an effect—they won't surprise you.
- And when these concerns come back, which they might, many times even in the next few minutes, you can recognize them now as old friends: "oh look, here is some anxiety again."
- This recognition is self-compassion, which means having empathy for yourself
- It helps you to be kind to yourself.
- It is not easy being human – cut yourself some slack!
- If this seems difficult, remember that you can gradually get better at this, just like you can gradually get better at anything through learning and practice.
- Practice doing this on your own at the start of each class, and **remember that everyone in the class is having their own struggles!**

In the School Bully Sketch from Key and Peele, what did Michael Keegan Key's character do really well?

List the three skills for calming other people down:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Remember, these three skills are not a guarantee; they might not always completely calm the situation. However, they will:

1. Give you a higher probability of success.
2. Are far less likely to escalate the conflict.
3. Minimize the creation of bad blood.

List the four skills we can develop to calm ourselves:

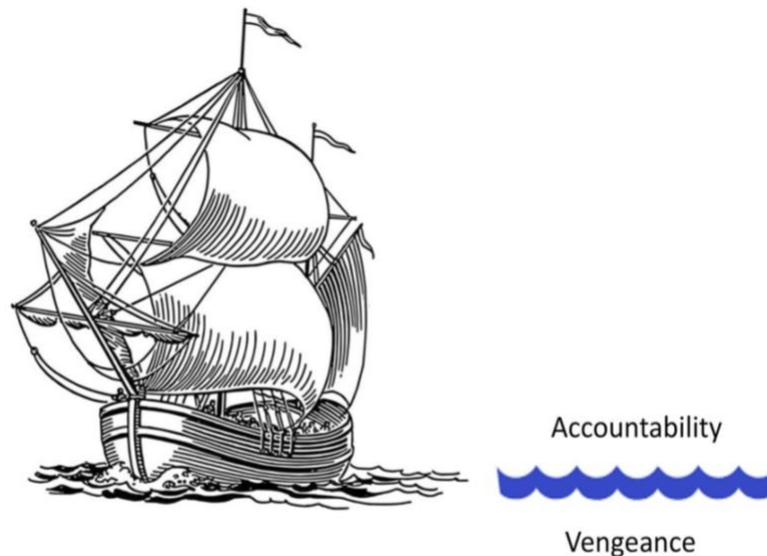
- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

- 4. _____

Our community is like a ship and the sea represents accountability. Sailing the sea of accountability is a challenge for every community.



The four skills for staying calm help our community navigate the sea of accountability. Giving the benefit of the doubt, for example, puts us in a better position as community members to assign consequences for aggressive behavior that are fair and just, rather than vengeful and cruel. Embracing vengeance is like sinking beneath the sea.

Appreciation Exercise which helps develop the skill of **keeping things in perspective during a conflict.**

(You won't be asked to share this.) Think of someone with whom you've had a conflict (don't write their name).

Write down two things you appreciate about them:

Tactical Breathing Exercise

One of the most common breathing techniques for calming yourself down is Four Count Breathing, also referred to as Tactical or Combat Breathing. Four Count breathing requires you to consciously regulate the amount of airflow your body is receiving over four second intervals. While it can be a difficult technique to master under extreme stress, the principle of the breathing is simple. Breathing is as follows:

1. Slowly inhale a deep breath over 4 seconds.
2. Hold the breath in for 4 seconds.
3. Slowly exhale the breath out over 4 seconds.
4. Hold the empty breath for 4 seconds.
5. Repeat until your breathing is under control.

In other words, take a deep breath through your nose for a count of four. 1, 2, 3, 4. Hold that breath for a count of four. 1, 2, 3, 4. Breath out through your mouth for a count of four. 1, 2, 3, 4. Hold again for a count of four without breathing at all. Then repeat the entire process four times. If your heart is racing this is a very quick way to slow it down and get a hold of yourself. It is a technique that I've used in my military and civilian life and has allowed me to control not only my body but my thoughts when doing things. You can use Tactical Breathing when you need to quickly get control of your breathing. It will take focus and control to maintain this rhythm ... Every person is different and sometimes repeating it 4 times does not calm people down, they might need to do it 5 or 6 times. It depends on the individual, but a general rule, especially when there isn't a lot of time such as in a combat situation, 4 is the way to go (from Ch. 5 of Grossman's *On Combat* 2012).

List the three kinds of fuel that feed the fires beneath aggression, and provide examples of each.

1. _____

Example _____

2. _____

Example _____

3. _____

Example _____