Peace Literacy Worksheet: Understanding and Healing Aggression 1
Name/date____________________________________

Learning Outcomes:
- Exercise Empathy to Recognize Distress in Ourselves
- Identify the Different Kinds of Aggression
- Recognize Aggression as a Distress Response
- Understand the Universal Human Phobia
- Listen with Empathy
- Exercise Empathy to Recognize Distress in Others

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 hundreds of thousands die from the effects of smoking, but every day millions of people smoke without worrying. 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.

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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.