




Emotions in Conflict

*Are they helpful or
harmful to
peacemaking?*

This resource will take you around four
hours to complete

solutions
not sides 



ABOUT

02

This resource helps you think about the role that emotions can play in the resolution or the continuation of conflict.

You will explore questions such as:

- What emotions have I experienced in conflict?
- What emotions hinder the resolution of conflict?
- What emotions help the resolution of conflict?
- How can we manage our emotions to achieve the outcomes we seek?

This activity can be completed on your own through reading and reflection, or working together with someone you know from home or school.

Let's get started!

Here are the kinds of skills which are important for this activity:



LISTENING



**EMOTIONAL
LITERACY**



OBJECTIVITY



EMPATHY





NEGATIVE EMOTIONS IN CONFLICT

03

What negative emotions have you experienced when having a conflict or an argument with someone?

Try to think of pure 'emotion' words such as: 'anger', 'hurt', 'fear', 'hatred', etc. Words such as 'judged', 'betrayed', 'cheated' are not pure emotion words as they also imply an opinion about the actions of those on the other side of the argument.

How is my opponent likely to respond if I behave like a jackal?

A jackal is a good animal to symbolise the natural behaviour we display when we have these negative emotions in conflict situations! However, responding like this usually makes the conflict worse and we are less likely to achieve the outcome we seek...

Opportunistic hunter

Aggressive



Acts fast

Loud and noisy

Sharp bite

Consumes prey

Pack animal

Ambushes prey

Instinct-driven





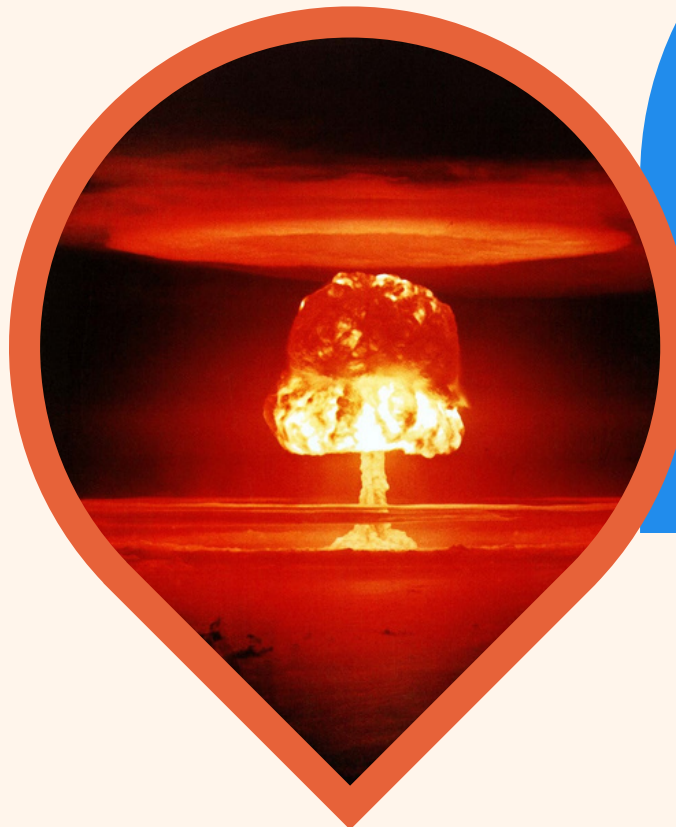
NATURE - HELP OR HIDERANCE?

04

It's important to remember that we developed these emotions over thousands of years as a survival tactic. Emotions are drivers or motivators. These negative emotions helped bind our social groups together behind a shared position to fight and resist an enemy, it's natural to have these emotions.

Once the 'jackal' emotions take over, how easy or difficult do you think it is to stop the conflict escalating further?

In our highly complex, global communities with modern warfare and communication techniques, what might the ultimate consequences of unchecked 'jackal' behaviour be?





EMOTIONS AND ISRAEL-PALESTINE

05

Some people have very strong negative emotions under the surface that lead them to back a certain position on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. These positions can be very 'triggering' to those holding the opposing position, leading to a 'jackal', hate-filled response, further entrenchment of those positions, and even violence.

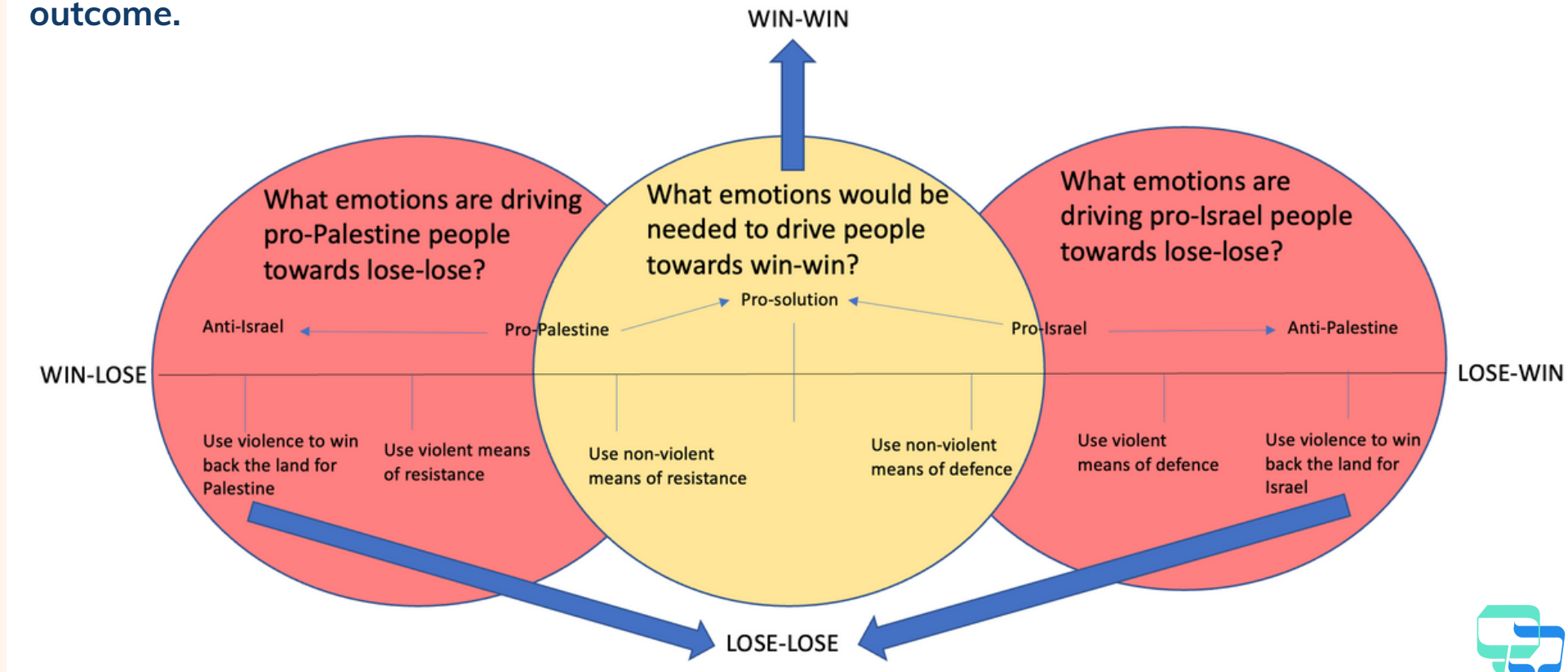




THE SPECTRUM OF POSITIONS AND EMOTIONS

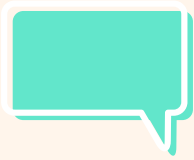
06

In the Solutions Not Sides education programme, we learn about what can happen if people hold a win-lose position. Take a look at this chart and think about how emotions in response to violence may become the drivers for people towards a win-lose (and therefore lose-lose) outcome.



Just as negative emotions may be drivers towards more violence and conflict, positive emotions may be drivers towards resolving conflict. What positive emotions might drive people towards win-win?





MANAGING EMOTIONS IN CONFLICT

07

Before positive emotions can begin to find a space in us, we need a way to manage the negative ones. Stepping back, taking time to breathe and trying to view the situation more objectively can help.

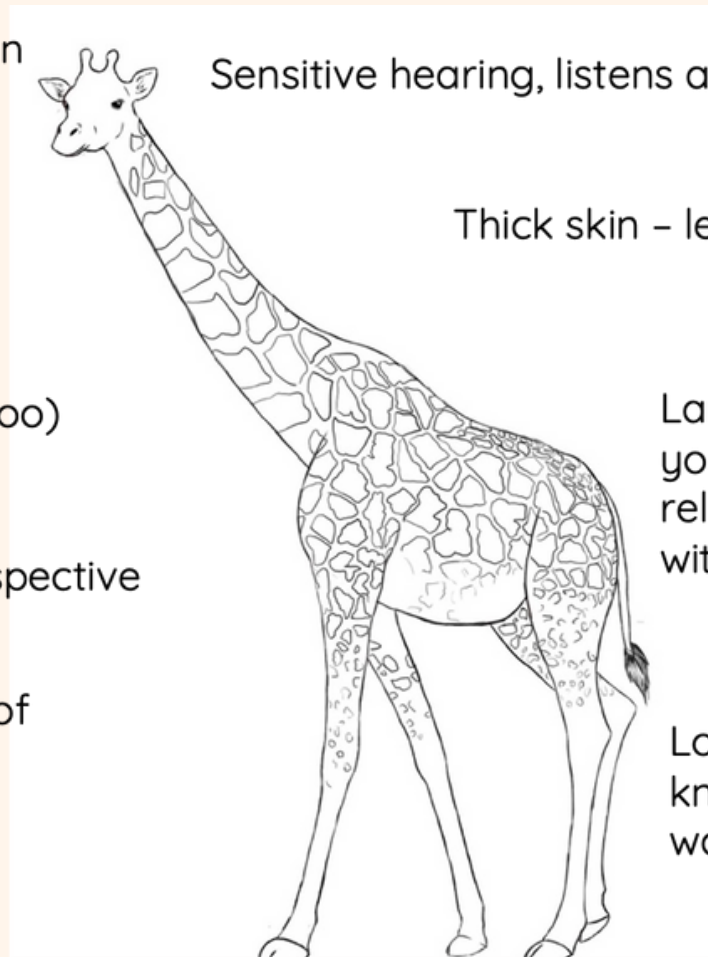
Horns – protective action when necessary

Big eyes – observes and notices

Quiet – doesn't speak (too) much

Long neck – sense of perspective

Big heart – the quality of knowing what you feel



Sensitive hearing, listens attentively

Thick skin – lets things go

Large lungs – use your breath to relax and deal with stress

Long legs – knows when to walk away

A giraffe is a good animal to symbolise the approach for managing negative emotions in conflict. Once the cloud of negative emotions has cleared, the rays of positive emotions have a chance to shine in.

Try some compassionate listening when negative emotions are becoming overwhelming, [click here](#) to learn how!





POSITIVE EMOTIONS IN CONFLICT

08

Think about the positive emotions you identified in slide 06. **Hope, empathy and respect** are some of the most effective emotions for driving a peace process between people in conflict. What might bring hope, empathy and respect to Israelis and Palestinians?



Watch [this trailer](#) for a film called 'Disturbing the Peace'. What brings motivation and hope for peace to the people in the video?

How can I encourage hope and empathy in my discussions about Palestine-Israel?



[This short film](#) from bereaved family members invokes empathy to drive an urgency to resolve the conflict

[This promo film](#) for an event promoting peace in 2020 looks to heroes of history to engender hope!





REFLECTION

09

- What have you learned about the role emotions can play in the escalation or the resolution of conflict?
- Next time you are in a conflict situation, what techniques can you use to manage negative emotions?
- What are some ways that you can engender positive emotions in conflict situations?





WHAT NOW?

10

- Create a plan for yourself about how you will deal with strong negative emotions next time you disagree with someone
- Do some research on empathy [here](#)
- Prepare a presentation for your class, friends or family on emotions in conflict



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