



HP²

(Hurt people, Hurt People)

$HP^2 = \text{Hurt people} \times \text{Hurt people}$ – The answer to this equation is exponential because if a person feels hurt enough, that person may choose to hurt several other people. Those hurt people may proceed to hurt several others more and so on. This can cause an exponential growth in the number of hurt people out there unless people decide to **BREAK THE CYCLE**



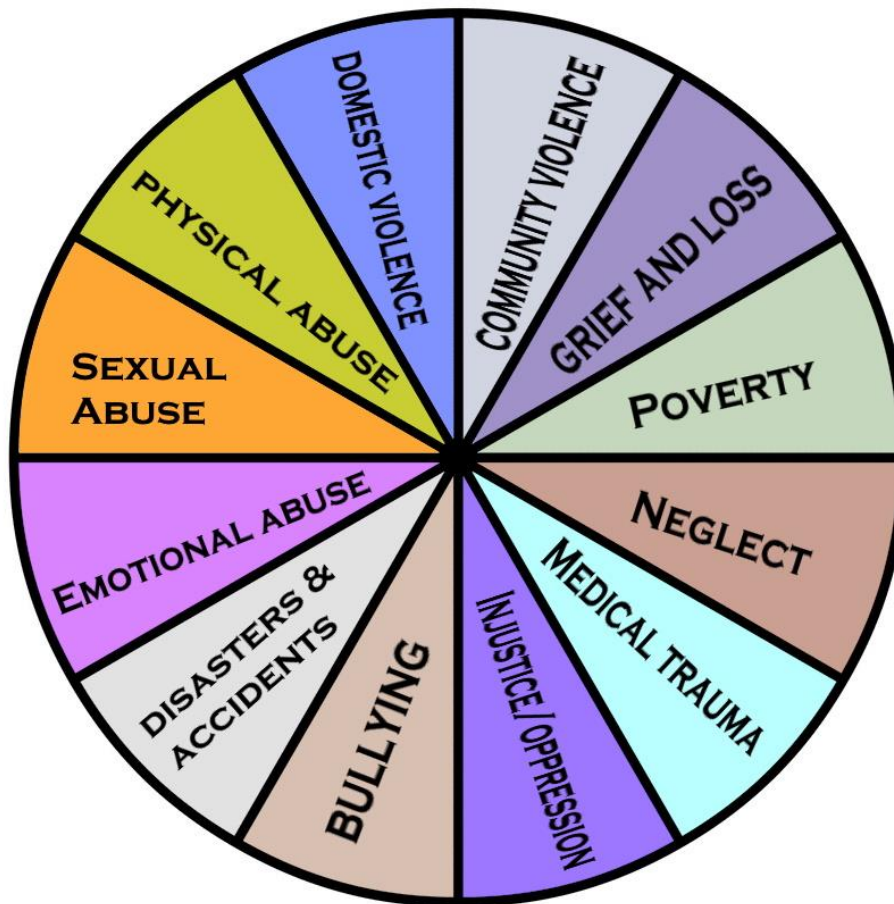
Breaking the Cycle - First, it is important to recognize the fact that many people who are hurt, do not end up purposely hurting others. Some people learn to heal from past hurt and move on without acting out later. Still, no one has had a perfect life, so everyone has been hurt at one point or another. Therefore, everyone should be able to benefit from this exercise on some level regardless of whether or not they have hurt others. ***Below we will discuss the process of breaking the cycle of hurt.***

1 - Insight and Self-Awareness – It is a good start to look at ways past or current hurt may be influencing your behavior. As a group, discuss some of the following questions focused specifically on gaining insight and self-awareness about how hurt may be manifesting itself. *(Be honest, these can be challenging questions)*

- Do you feel annoyed or angry more often than you would like too?
- Would others who know you say that you seem to be irritable or stressed out?
- Do you find yourself getting into arguments or disputes or having interpersonal difficulties?
- Do you find yourself feeling angry at yourself or thinking bad thoughts about yourself?
- Do you find yourself thinking about/feeling resentment, revenge, regret, depression or self-doubt?



The Wheel of Hurt – Some areas and experiences that can trigger and fuel hurt



2-Overcoming Lies and Excuses – There are a number of lies and excuses that we may tell ourselves which can perpetuate negative behaviors and attitudes that may be fueled or triggered by hurt. Consider a few:

“Hurting other people makes me feel better” – People can spend a lifetime fighting, arguing, yelling, etc., with the false hope that this will result in self-healing. The truth is that aggression toward others may bring a temporary rush of adrenaline that may feel good, but the problem is that this is only temporary. What often happens is that a person may need to keep on fighting and hurting others to keep experiencing the same temporary relief, which is not a long-term solution. Rather it is a recipe for ongoing pain

“I was hurt, so it is ok to hurt others” (Justifying) – It can be a mistake to fool yourself into thinking that being hurt yourself justifies hurting others. This just perpetuates aggression and violence in the world

“Nice or kind people are weak- I need to be tough” – This is also another lie. To the contrary, there is great strength in being able to walk away from a fight or an argument. At times the world promotes the idea of the need to step on others to get ahead. The truth is that a peaceful life is more likely to lead to real success.



3-Heal by Changing Hurting Behavior - Healing from hurt can take a long time. Some people are able to make progress on their own with support from friends and loved ones. Others need additional professional help and therapy. It's a process. The truth is: Everyone Can Improve: As stated earlier, regardless of whether you have identified this as a problem or not, there are things that everyone can work on to be less hurtful. *Review the following list and pick some items that stand out to you as areas you could benefit by working on*

Give people the benefit of the doubt – Rather than jump to conclusions and get angry at people without knowing all the facts, try not to make assumptions and instead drop it when possible

Patience – A lot of arguments and fights can be avoided by just being patient and waiting to speak or act

Empathy- Practice putting yourself in other people's shoes. This can help with understanding and make it easier to give other people a break or to just let it go

Lower your "offense radar" – If you are looking to be offended hard enough, you will find it. It can be helpful to overlook smaller, more innocent mistakes and misunderstandings without turning to anger or aggression

Turn it over – Rather than act on anger, turn the anger over to a more positive source. Try to speak to a close friend, support group or a therapist rather than acting out when you feel hurt. If you are spiritual then you can pray to let go of your anger.

Improve your surroundings – If you find yourself feeling hurt often, perhaps you need to look at who and where you are spending your time. Sometimes you can put yourself in more positive surroundings. If you hang out with angry or aggressive people, that can be contagious. Instead look for peaceable easy-going associates

Therapy – If you feel like you suffer from deeper hurt or trauma, therapy may be needed and it can be very beneficial

Focus on the present – This means learning to let go of the past. If your past is hurtful, it may be time to start working on letting it go.

Positive Self Talk – If hurtful messages are running through your brain, it can be helpful to fill your mind with positive thoughts about what you are grateful for, what you love and appreciate, and ways you can feel the joy of helping others which will in turn help you help yourself

Forgive, live and love – Use the energy you might have wasted on revenge, depression, aggression or pain instead toward something positive like helping others or doing your part to make someone's life a little better

Forgive yourself- Sometimes hurt stays active because of resentment toward ourselves for not doing something different in the past. Letting go of any negative self thoughts and feelings is essential to healing. Healing often starts from within