

CONCEPTS that will be covered in the lesson

- Illustrate how, when under stress, we are prone to sometimes outbursts or “snapping”
- Also illustrate how “snapping” when around other people can quickly and easily lead to conflict
- Then compare how Jesus responds to a stressful situation vs how his disciples respond to the same stressful situation. The one difference in the story that is between them: Prayer

Materials needed:

1. Movie clip (available on rfour.org) from *Patch Adams*
2. Electronics that show the video clip
3. For activity
 - a. Four to six old-fashioned mousetraps (wood-based with a spring and a metal trap)
 - b. An empty trashcan
 - c. Two baskets
 - d. Scrap paper to write on and then ball up
 - e. Writing utensils
 - f. A rope at least 5 feet long to use as a boundary.
4. Set up for activity
 - a. Set rope up as a boundary that students must stand behind *at all times*
 - b. Place the trashcan 8 to 12 feet away from the rope
 - c. *Optional:* Place something behind the trashcan so that the balled-up paper being thrown won't go past the trashcan
 - d. Place the mousetraps around the trashcan (mostly in an arc) and then *set* them
 - i. Note: The cheap \$1 wooden mousetraps are not easy to set; so you might want to set this up before class starts.
 - e. The idea is that the students will attempt to throw balled pieces of paper into the trashcan, but if they miss, it might (*hopefully*) set off one or more of the traps

THE LESSON

OPENING PRAYER

OPENING QUESTION

- One of the things we do every class is ask and answer the opening question at the beginning of class – because it helps us 1. Learn more about each other and 2. Helps “warm us up” for some of the ideas in the upcoming lesson. So we’re going to do that now.
- So here’s the opening question for today’s class. I [the teacher] will ask the question and then to give you some time to think of an answer, I will answer first.
- Once I answer the question, we’ll go around the circle and each of us will answer.
- When it’s your turn, start with your name and then answer the question to the best of your ability.
- **Here’s this week’s question:** We’re going to do something a little bit different today for the opening question. Each of us is going to write down 5 things that make us angry. Note: These might get read outloud, but you don’t need to sign them and please don’t use other people’s names when saying what makes you angry. We’ll then go around the circle and share *one* of the things that you wrote down that makes you angry.

TRANSITION TO ACTIVITY

- We’re starting a new session today. In it, we will read and discuss stories involving prayer.
- Two of the things we’ll talk about are “What prayer is” and “Why we might choose to pray.”
- The stories in this session will give us an opportunity to discuss these two questions by giving reasons for why the characters in the stories are praying as well as the outcomes of their prayers are.
- To help us prepare to discuss today’s scripture story, we’re going to do an activity that uses the things that you wrote down that make you angry.

EXPLAIN ACTIVITY

- We're going to split into two teams.
- Each team will then take their “anger notes” and crumple / ball up those notes and put into their team’s “bucket/basket of anger”
- The goal of this activity, then, is to get rid of your anger by throwing the things that make you angry in this bucket way over here.
- First team to 10 points wins
- **Note:** You **MAY NOT** pass this line/rope during the activity.

- I repeat: **NO STUDENTS MAY GO PAST THIS LINE/ROPE!** (this is a safety issue due to the mouse traps)

- The teams will alternate throws; one person at a time per team throws.
- If you miss while trying to throw away the things that make you angry, your miss might very well trigger a reaction – as illustrated by the mouse traps (notice the four to six traps surrounding the bucket) that we’ve set up and are ready to snap at the slightest disturbance!
- Your team gets 1 point if you get a piece of paper in the bucket.
- However, your team loses one point for every mouse trap your throw causes to snap.
- Every time a mouse trap snaps, we'll read the thing from the piece of paper that made it snap.
- Again, first team to 10 points wins.
- Any questions?

DO ACTIVITY

ASK / TELL

- Did *all* of the missed notes cause a trap to snap? (most likely not)
- Was there one note that caused multiple traps to snap?
- What were some of the written reasons that caused the traps to snap?
- Would you agree that the written reasons that “caused” the traps to snap were somewhat random, then?
- Thank you for participating in this activity.
- Hopefully, it can help us think about how things that make us angry sometimes make us snap, but other times do not cause us to snap.
- Conflict, too, can happen in a moment, in a snap. And for somewhat seemingly random reasons – especially when something similar didn’t cause conflict just a few moments before or after.
- In today’s scripture story, we’re going to read about Jesus being arrested.
- This story happens just after the Last Supper – which we read in our last session
- After that meal ends, Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray.
- And then some not good things happen that cause some people to snap, but not other people.
- Let’s see what happens.

READ Luke 22:39-54 *(recommendation: Have class read it aloud; one person per verse)*

39He [Jesus] came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. 40When he reached the place, he said to them, “Pray that you may not come into the time of trial.” 41Then he withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, knelt down, and prayed, 42“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done.” 43Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. 44In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. 45When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, 46and he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial.”

47While he was still speaking, suddenly a crowd came, and the one called Judas, one of the twelve, was leading

them. He approached Jesus to kiss him; 48but Jesus said to him, “Judas, is it with a kiss that you are betraying the Son of Man?” 49When those who were around him saw what was coming, they asked, “Lord, should we strike with the sword?” 50Then one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. 51But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And he touched his ear and healed him. 52Then Jesus said to the chief priests, the officers of the temple police, and the elders who had come for him, “Have you come out with swords and clubs as if I were a bandit? 53When I was with you day after day in the temple, you did not lay hands on me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness!”

54Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest’s house. But Peter was following at a distance.”

ASK

- In verse 40 what does Jesus tell the disciples to do? (to pray)
- In verse 41, what does Jesus do? (prays)
- Verse 42, what does Jesus ask for? (that “this cup” be removed from him)

- Also in his prayer, whose will does Jesus say should be done? (God's)
- That "cup" that Jesus is referring to is Jesus' impending arrest and crucifixion. I think it is important to note that at this moment in the story, Jesus could still escape. He could just walk away. But in verse 43 and 44, what does God's response appear to be to Jesus? (that the cup will not be taken away)
- In verse 45, what does Jesus discover the disciples doing? (sleeping)
- That would've probably been pretty disappointing to Jesus, don't you think? He's so busy praying that he's super sweaty. But in the meantime, his disciples are *sleeping*. But instead of getting angry at them, Jesus keeps teaching. In verse 46, why does Jesus tell them they should be praying? (so that they will not come into the time of trial)
- Verse 47, who shows up? (A crowd, led by Judas)
- Verse 47 and 48, there's a phrase "betrayed by a kiss" that dates back at least as far back as this story – but does Judas actually kiss Jesus? (No, he doesn't. Jesus stops him)
- Verse 49, are the disciples finally awake? (yes, and ready to attack)
- Verse 50, do the disciples wait for an answer to their question in verse 49 about attacking? (no)
- What do the disciples do instead? (attack)
- What is the result of the attack? (a cut-off ear to the high priest's slave/servant)
- Verse 51, what is Jesus' response to this attack? (he commands his disciples to stop AND he heals his enemy)
- Despite Jesus' healing of the servant, what happens to Jesus in verse 54? (He is arrested and taken to the high priest's house)

TELL

- First, let me say that I find this to be the saddest Bible story – and there's a bunch of them to choose from. But this one just breaks my heart.
- I think one of the main reasons it is so sad is because Jesus knows it's going to happen and he *lets* it happen.
- He doesn't run away from it. He doesn't try to fight it or stop it.
- Instead, he asks God for permission to stop it. When Jesus does not receive permission to stop it, then he follows through with God's plan.
- We see that Jesus is comforted by a messenger from God, but still...we see that this is NOT an easy thing for Jesus – the story says he's sweating profusely from the strain of what he's being asked to do.
- Furthermore, the disciples fall asleep instead of praying; instead of being supportive, they take a nap.
- And it is that difference in choice, of Jesus praying and the disciples sleeping, that I want us to focus on. Because I think that difference then explains the difference between the disciples' response and Jesus' response to being arrested.
- The disciples at least remember to ask Jesus for permission to act, but they don't actually listen for a response. Instead, they act without direction, and their act is one of violence.
- The disciples are afraid and angry and in their fear and anger, they don't listen and the conflict happens in a snap.
- But, and this is rather amazing, Jesus doesn't let that one snap become *lots* of snaps.
- He tells his disciples to stop what they are doing AND he heals the servant.
- And the reason Jesus is able to not get caught up in the moment AND heal his enemy while his disciples are doing the exact opposite of him is because he prayed.
- He took the time to talk with God and to listen to God about the upcoming situation and because he did, Jesus was able to see and understand the situation (once it happened) differently than his disciples.
- This different understanding allowed Jesus to provide healing in a stressful situation.

- Jesus response was a very different response than the one his disciples gave, since they were the ones who actually caused the injury that required healing in the first place.
- Again, the reason Jesus is able to do this is because he spent time listening to God in prayer while his disciples did not (because they fell asleep).

TRANSITION TO VIDEO CLIP

- To help us think about how listening and thinking about what was heard can lead to seeing and understanding a situation differently, let's watch the following clip from the movie, "Patch Adams."
- In the clip, both Patch and the other man (Arthur) are patients in a psyche ward.
- So, when someone says something, it's pretty easy to not listen since everyone is crazy.
- But Arthur has been encouraging the other patients to figure out a puzzle of how many fingers he's holding up.
- Let's see if Patch has figured out the answer.

WATCH Movie Clip

ASK

- What did "Patch" want to know from Arthur? (how many fingers there were)
- Did Arthur seem to want to talk to Patch? (certainly not at first)
- When Patch didn't get an answer at first, did he leave? (No)
- What did he do instead? (at first he waited, and then he "patched" the coffee cup)
- What did Patch then learn? (that you see 8 fingers when you focus on an object beyond the fingers)

TELL

- In the movie clip, "Patch" makes time to talk, ask questions, and listen.
- When at first he doesn't get an answer, he doesn't then leave or fall asleep.
- Instead, he waits (and fixes a coffee cup)
- And because of that waiting, Patch is then able to see and understand something new.
- In today's story, we see Jesus do something similar.
- He prays. He waits. He listens.
- And because he prays and then *waits* for a response from God, he is able to hear and understand something new (or be reminded of something he already knew) about the situation that he was facing.
- And, because of that prayer time, Jesus was able to respond very differently than his disciples when they were all faced with a very tense moment.
- Whereas his disciples inflicted violence, Jesus offered healing and a level head even when it did not benefit him.
- This is one instance of what prayer can do: It can be directive, offer support, provide insight, lead to calmness in stressful situations, and provide healing instead of "snaps" of conflict.

CLOSING PRAYER