

## nonviolent communication is . . . ?

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is sometimes referred to as compassionate communication. Its purpose is to strengthen our ability to inspire compassion from others and to respond compassionately to others and to ourselves. NVC guides us to reframe how we express ourselves and hear others by focusing our consciousness on what we are **observing, feeling, needing,** and **requesting**.

We are trained to make careful observations free of evaluation, and to specify behaviors and conditions that are affecting us. We learn to hear our own deeper needs and those of others, and to identify and clearly articulate what we are wanting in a given moment. When we focus on clarifying what is being observed, felt, and needed, rather than on diagnosing and judging, we discover the depth of our own compassion. Through its emphasis on deep listening—to ourselves as well as others—NVC fosters respect, attentiveness and empathy, and engenders a mutual desire to give from the heart. The form is simple, yet powerfully transformative.

While it is taught through the use of a concrete model, and is referred to as “a process of communication” or a “language of compassion,” Nonviolent Communication is more than a process or a language. As our cultural conditioning often leads our attention in directions unlikely to get us what we want, NVC serves as an ongoing reminder to focus our attention on places that have the potential to yield what we are seeking—a **flow between ourselves and others based on a mutual giving from the heart**.

Founded on language and communication skills that enable us to remain human, even under trying conditions, Nonviolent Communication contains nothing new: all that has been integrated into NVC has been known for centuries. The intent is to remind us about what we already know—about how we humans were meant to relate to one another—and to assist us in living in a way that concretely manifests this knowledge.

The use of NVC does not require that the persons with whom we are communicating be literate in NVC or even motivated to relate to us compassionately. If we stay with the principles of NVC, with the sole intention to give and receive compassionately, and do everything we can to let others know this is our only motive, they will join us in the process and eventually we will be able to respond compassionately to one another. While this may not happen quickly, it is our experience that compassion inevitably blossoms when we stay true to the principles and process of Nonviolent Communication.

adapted from *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life* by Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D.  
Published by PuddleDancer Press, [available from CNVC](#)

### *nonviolent communication skills*

As the name implies, this approach to communication emphasizes **compassion** as the motivation for action rather than fear, guilt, shame, blame, coercion, threat or justification for punishment. In other words, it is about getting what you want for reasons you will not regret later. These techniques allow you to make conscious choices about how you will respond whether you get what you want, or not. It is definitely NOT about guilt and tricking people into giving you what you want.

The skills are built on Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg's application of Nonviolent Communication. The process of NVC encourages us to focus on what we and others are **observing**, how and why we are each **feeling** as we do, what our underlying **needs** are, and what each of us **would like** to have happen. These skills emphasize personal responsibility for our actions and the choices we make when we respond to others.

Nonviolent Communication skills will assist you in dealing with major blocks to communication such as demands, diagnoses and blaming. In CNVC trainings you will learn to express your feelings without attacking. This will help minimize the likelihood of facing defensive reactions in others. The skills will help you make clear requests. They will help you receive critical and hostile messages without taking them personally, giving in, or losing self-esteem. These skills will be useful with your family, friends, students, subordinates, supervisors, co-workers and clients. These skills will be useful with your own internal dialogues.

NVC is a clear and effective model for communicating in a way that is cooperative, conscious, and compassionate.

## 10 things we can do to contribute to internal, interpersonal, and organizational peace

- (1) Spend some time each day quietly reflecting on how we would like to relate to ourselves and others.
- (2) Remember that all human beings have the same needs.
- (3) Check our intention to see if we are as interested in others getting their needs met as our own.
- (4) When asking someone to do something, check first to see if we are making a request or a demand.
- (5) Instead of saying what we DON'T want someone to do, say what we DO want the person to do.
- (6) Instead of saying what we want someone to BE, say what action we'd like the person to take that we hope will help the person be that way.
- (7) Before agreeing or disagreeing with anyone's opinions, try to tune in to what the person is feeling and needing.
- (8) Instead of saying "No," say what need of ours prevents us from saying "Yes."
- (9) If we are feeling upset, think about what need of ours is not being met, and what we could do to meet it, instead of thinking about what's wrong with others or ourselves.
- (10) Instead of praising someone who did something we like, express our gratitude by telling the person what need of ours that action met.

The Center for Nonviolent Communication (CNVC) would like there to be a critical mass of people using Nonviolent Communication language so all people will get their needs met and resolve their conflicts peacefully.

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### the 2 parts and 4 components of nvc

#### empathic listening:

observations

feelings

needs

requests

#### honestly expressing

observations

feelings

needs

requests

Both sides of the NVC model: empathically listening and honestly expressing, use the four steps of the model: observations, feelings, needs, requests.

## needs inventory

The following list of needs is neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is meant as a starting place to support anyone who wishes to engage in a process of deepening self-discovery and to facilitate greater understanding and connection between people.

### CONNECTION

acceptance  
affection  
appreciation  
belonging  
cooperation  
communication  
closeness  
community  
companionship  
compassion  
consideration  
consistency  
empathy  
inclusion  
intimacy  
love  
mutuality  
nurturing  
respect/self-respect  
safety  
security  
stability  
support  
to know and be known  
to see and be seen  
to understand and  
be understood  
trust  
warmth

### HONESTY

authenticity  
integrity  
presence

### PLAY

joy  
humor

### PEACE

beauty  
communion  
ease  
equality  
harmony  
inspiration  
order

### PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

air  
food  
movement/exercise  
rest/sleep  
sexual expression  
safety  
shelter  
touch  
water

### MEANING

awareness  
celebration of life  
challenge  
clarity  
competence  
consciousness  
contribution  
creativity  
discovery  
efficacy  
effectiveness  
growth  
hope  
learning  
mourning  
participation  
purpose  
self-expression  
stimulation  
to matter  
understanding

### AUTONOMY

choice  
freedom  
independence  
space  
spontaneity

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## feelings inventories

The following are words we use when we want to express a combination of emotional states and physical sensations. This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is meant as a starting place to support anyone who wishes to engage in a process of deepening self-discovery and to facilitate greater understanding and connection between people.

There are two parts to this list: feelings we may have when our needs **are** being met and feelings we may have when our needs are **not** being met.

### *feelings when your needs are satisfied*

#### **AFFECTIONATE**

compassionate  
friendly  
loving  
open hearted  
sympathetic  
tender  
warm

#### **CONFIDENT**

empowered  
open  
proud  
safe  
secure

#### **ENGAGED**

absorbed  
alert  
curious  
engrossed  
enchanted  
entranced  
fascinated  
interested  
intrigued  
involved  
spellbound  
stimulated

#### **INSPIRED**

amazed  
awed  
wonder

#### **EXCITED**

amazed  
animated  
ardent  
aroused  
astonished  
dazzled  
eager  
energetic  
enthusiastic  
giddy  
invigorated  
lively  
passionate  
surprised  
vibrant

#### **EXHILARATED**

blissful  
ecstatic  
elated  
enthralled  
exuberant  
radiant  
rapturous  
thrilled

#### **GRATEFUL**

appreciative  
moved  
thankful  
touched

#### **HOPEFUL**

expectant  
encouraged  
optimistic

#### **JOYFUL**

amused  
delighted  
glad  
happy  
jubilant  
pleased  
tickled

#### **PEACEFUL**

calm  
clear headed  
comfortable  
centered  
content  
equanimous  
fulfilled  
mellow  
quiet  
relaxed  
relieved  
satisfied  
serene  
still  
tranquil  
trusting

#### **REFRESHED**

enlivened  
rejuvenated  
renewed  
rested  
restored  
revived

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*feelings when your needs are not satisfied*

**AFRAID**

apprehensive  
dread  
foreboding  
frightened  
mistrustful  
panicked  
petrified  
scared  
suspicious  
terrified  
wary  
worried

**ANNOYED**

aggravated  
dismayed  
disgruntled  
displeased  
exasperated  
frustrated  
impatient  
irritated  
irked

**ANGRY**

enraged  
furious  
incensed  
indignant  
irate  
livid  
outraged  
resentful

**AVERSION**

animosity  
appalled  
contempt  
disgusted  
dislike  
hate  
horrified  
hostile  
repulsed

**CONFUSED**

ambivalent  
baffled  
bewildered  
dazed  
hesitant  
lost  
mystified  
perplexed  
puzzled  
torn

**DISCONNECTED**

alienated  
aloof  
apathetic  
bored  
cold  
detached  
distant  
distracted  
indifferent  
numb  
removed  
uninterested  
withdrawn

**DISQUIET**

agitated  
alarmed  
discombobulated  
disconcerted  
disturbed  
perturbed  
rattled  
restless  
shocked  
startled  
surprised  
troubled  
turbulent  
turmoil  
uncomfortable  
uneasy  
unnerved  
unsettled  
upset

**EMBARRASSED**

ashamed  
chagrined  
flustered  
guilty  
mortified  
self-conscious

**FATIGUE**

beat  
burnt out  
depleted  
exhausted  
lethargic  
listless  
sleepy  
tired  
weary  
worn out

**PAIN**

agony  
anguished  
bereaved, grief  
devastated  
heartbroken  
hurt  
lonely  
miserable  
regretful, remorseful

**SAD**

depressed  
dejected  
despair  
despondent  
disappointed  
discouraged  
disheartened  
forlorn  
gloomy  
heavy hearted  
hopeless  
melancholy  
unhappy  
wretched

**TENSE**

anxious  
cranky  
distressed  
distraught  
edgy  
fidgety, jittery  
frazzled  
irritable  
nervous  
overwhelmed, stressed out  
restless

**VULNERABLE**

fragile  
guarded  
helpless  
insecure  
leery  
reserved  
sensitive  
shaky

**YEARNING**

envious, jealous  
longing  
nostalgic  
pining  
wistful

# HATHOR the COWGODDESS

STOP MOMMY! CRY! CRY! NO MOMMY NO! WAAA! CRY!

YOU'RE JUST A BABY! A BIG GIANT BABY!

No! NO! WAAA! CRY!

SNIFF

I'M GOING TO FORCE THE BIG CRYBABY INTO THE BABY SWING!

CRY!

WAAA! NO! MOMMY WAAH! CRY!

I'VE GOT MY CAMERA, I'M TAKING A BIG PICTURE OF THE BIG BABY!

EXCUSE ME? THAT'S A VERY INTERESTING PARENTING TECHNIQUE, WHAT IS IT? OH WAIT... LET ME GUESS!

WHIMPER

YOU SEE, I'M A BIT OF A PARENTING TECHNIQUE AFICIONADO. LET ME SEE.. OH! I'VE GOT IT!

SNIFF SNIFF

IT'S CALLED 'PUBLIC SHAMING' FIRST DEVELOPED IN THE DARK AGES...

??

?!

AND THE GOAL IS A MEEK, FRIGHTENED, COWERING CHILD WHO EASILY SUBMITS TO BULLYING!

HARUMPH! WE'RE LEAVING!

SOME PEOPLE HAVE STRANGE GOALS FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

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