

LifeServing Communication

LifeServing Communication, also known as Nonviolent Communication (NVC), is a language of intention to connect with the humanness and aliveness in ourselves and others. This quality of connection awakens compassion and the desire to contribute to one another's wellbeing. NVC offers concrete tools to help us reside in Rumi's field: "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and right-doing, there is a field. I'll meet you there." The intention of NVC is to create a sense of connection so all needs are considered.



Two Parts

Empathically Listening to others: hearing how they are underneath, regardless of what words and actions they use to express their truth.

Honestly Expressing how I am without blame, criticism, or judgment, so others are most likely to hear me.

Four Components

1. **Observation** without evaluation
The concrete actions I am observing (seeing, hearing, remembering, or imagining)
2. **Feelings** not thoughts, assumptions, or interpretations.
Making myself vulnerable by sharing how I am feeling in relation to these observations.
3. **Needs** not strategies
The life energy in the form of needs, hopes, values, and desires creating my feelings.
4. **Requests** without demand
Clearly requesting the concrete actions I would like taken to enrich my life.

Empathy

- O. "When you (see, hear, imagine)..."
- F. "are you feeling..."
- N. "because you (need, hope value)..."
- R. "Now would you like..."

Honesty

- O. "When I (see, hear, imagine)..."
- F. "I feel..."
- N. "because I (need, hope value)..."
- R. "Now I would like..."

Key Point: You feel because you need..

I feel because I need...

Our feelings are caused by our needs, beliefs, and thoughts: not by what others do or say, not by what happens to us.

Life Alienating Communication

Moralistic Judgements, justification for punishment and reward, figuring out who is right or wrong and what they deserve.

Diagnosing, analyzing, criticizing, categorizing, or labeling others or judging others as good or bad—inducing shame or guilt.

Denying Choice, blaming others for causing our feelings, obscuring choice by saying "I had to" —inducing guilt.

Demanding, threatening, bribing—inducing fear.

Life Connecting Communication

Remembering that we are all interdependent and figuring out how to contribute to everyone's wellbeing.

Respecting others and self, knowing we are all acting to meet our common basic needs.

Responsibility for our own actions, beliefs, feelings, and thoughts.

Requesting what will make life more wonderful and appreciating "yes" or "no" as a move towards connection.

FEELINGS

GLAD

happy
cheerful
delighted
inspired
excited
joyful
touched
encouraged
grateful
confident

SAD

lonely
depressed
grief
hurt
troubled
helpless
gloomy
dismayed
disheartened
discouraged

MAD

angry
annoyed
furious
upset
frustrated
irritated
bitter
enraged
resentful
disgusted

TIRED

exhausted
weary
lethargic
indifferent
helpless
disconnected
apathetic
overwhelmed

SCARED

afraid
terrified
startled
nervous
worried
lonely
anxious
helpless

CONFUSED

disturbed
hesitant
troubled
torn
puzzled
insecure
apprehensive
embarrassed

PEACEFUL

calm
content
engrossed
optimistic
tranquil
serene
relieved
relaxed
satisfied

LOVING

affectionate
tender
trusting
friendly
sensitive
compassionate
grateful
comfortable
amorous

PLAYFUL

energetic
curious
enthusiastic
refreshed
adventurous
impish
alive
exuberant
giddy

REQUESTS

A request is a bridge to connecting. A "no" following a request is not a rejection, but rather, an invitation to learn what is of value to the other person, to connect.

Connecting Requests

"I'm not sure I made myself clear, would you be willing to tell me what you heard me say?"

"Would you be willing to tell me how you feel having heard that?"

"I would like you to tell me if you think my proposal would be successful, and if not, what you believe would prevent its success."

Action Requests

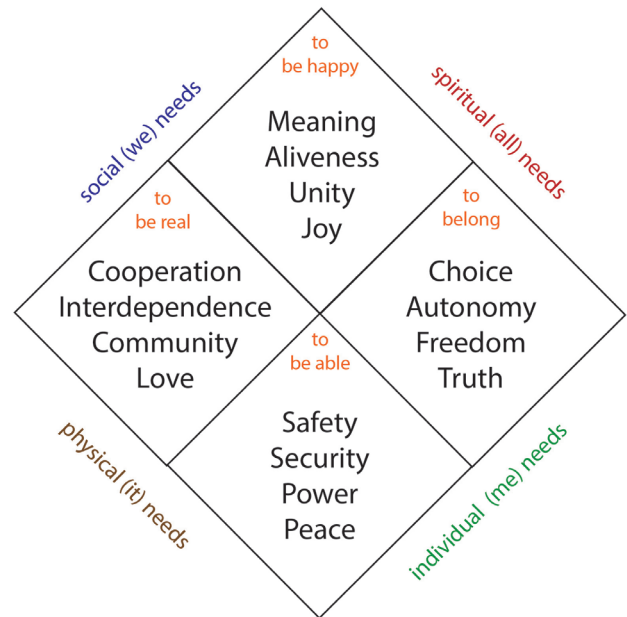
Do-able (observable behavior)

Specific (specify who and what)

Positive (what you do want, not what you don't want)

Present (can be done now - might be a commitment)

NEEDS



Needs, Hopes, Values and Positive Intentions

All human behavior is for the purpose of meeting needs. In NVC needs are understood to be universal (we all have the same needs). Needs make no reference to a specific person, action, or thing. Our needs connect us with what we value in life. Our feelings tell us whether or not our needs are being met. To express our needs is to offer the gift of connection to life.

When persons fear they won't get their needs met, they often act in ways that preclude other needs from being met. Behind each action based on fear there is a positive intention or hope based on love. If we don't like some behavior in ourselves or others, recognizing the needs and positive intentions causing the action can foster compassion and generate solutions.

Four Basic Groups of Needs

Physical—security, safety, nourishment, warmth, rest, ease, power, efficacy, movement, harmony, peace

Individual—autonomy, authenticity, integrity, creativity, free choice, self-esteem, learning, honesty, challenge, self-expression, space, clarity, growth, learning, truth

Social—community, intimacy, appreciation, nurturance, empathy, respect, cooperation, consideration, support, kindness, to be seen, reassurance, acceptance, love

Spiritual—aliveness, purpose beyond self, wholeness, meaning, celebration, inspiration, contribution, beauty, mourning, unity, connection with life, play, joy

Based on the work of Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.d.

www.cnvc.org