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Partial list of organizations served by NVCSC

Palo Alto Medical Foundation • University of California–Santa Cruz
Monarch Media • Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
Dominican Hospital • Barrios Unidos • Santa Cruz High School
Temple Beth El • Unitarian Universalist, Santa Cruz • Hospice of Salinas
Santa Cruz Adult School • Blaine Street Women's Jail
Santa Cruz Waldorf School • Santa Cruz County Office of Rehabilitation
Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District

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Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD, founder
The Center for Nonviolent Communication

NVC was developed by Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD, and now he and over 300 certified trainers have introduced it to individuals and organizations in over 65 countries. The NVC process has been applied in war-torn regions, schools, prisons, corporations, health care settings, and government institutions. It is also applicable for social change and for personal relationships.

To learn more about the international organization, please visit The Center for Nonviolent Communication at cnvc.org.

Communicating for Positive Outcomes

Introduction to Compassionate Communication

(aka Nonviolent Communication)

Organizations, Workplaces, Families, Couples, and Individuals

❖　Enjoy more effective communication

❖　Increase mutual respect and understanding

❖　Transform resentment, frustration, disappointment

Training • Mediation • Coaching

## Nonviolent Communication Santa Cruz (NVCSC)

**NVCSC is a local nonprofit that offers classes, workshops, and trainings.
We can tailor a training specifically for your needs.**

**831.440.8979 / nvcsantacruz.org**

About This Training

The skills outlined in this booklet are based on Nonviolent Communication (NVC), which is a four-part process that encourages effective and honest dialogue. It can be used in any setting, including business, home, government, school, and between individuals. The word "nonviolent" evokes the tradition of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., who used it to describe a spirit of human connection that bridges across differences.

The purpose of NVC is to speak and listen in a manner that reduces defensiveness and blame. NVC offers tools that help us hear beyond criticism to the needs that another person is trying to express. When people are heard and understood, many conflicts can be avoided or repaired.
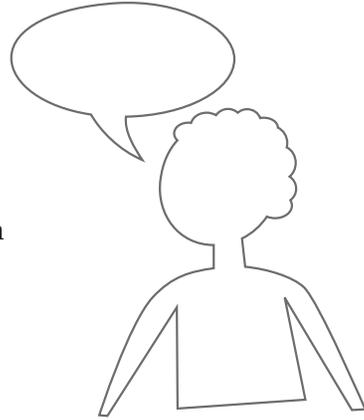
NVC achieves these goals by reframing ideas and words that create misunderstanding into ideas and words that connect us, based on our mutual needs.
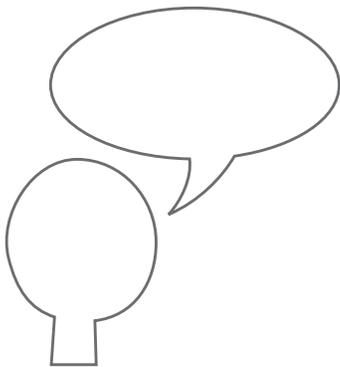
NVC builds on the "I-Statement" and "Active Listening" models by adding a focus on common needs and making specific requests.

NVC is effective in all settings because it can be as concise or expansive as necessary while achieving positive outcomes to communication challenges.

Observation – A factual report of a situation without any opinion or evaluation. Observations do not assume motivation or judge right or wrong.

Feeling – A pure emotion (e.g., sad, happy, excited, frustrated). Feelings are not thoughts. For example, "I feel that was a bad choice on your part," is an expression of a thought, not a feeling.

Need/Value – A universal human requirement or desire. Food, shelter, love, meaning, and purpose are examples of needs. A need is different than a strategy. A strategy is an action to meet a need. For example, going out to dinner with friends is a strategy to fulfill the need for companionship and celebration.

Request – Asking for an action or behavior without making a demand or implying a consequence.

Empathy – Listening with compassion for a person's feelings, needs, and requests. Listening without adding our own advice or judgment.

Self–Empathy – Understanding our own feelings and needs with compassion, not judgment.

> "[NVC]…ensured the kind of results we were after: clear, direct communication within our organization delivered with compassion and strength so the mission of our organization could thrive."
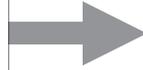> – *Organizational leader in the SF Bay Area*
>
> "[NVC] provides us with the most effective tools to foster health and relationships."
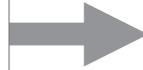> – *Deepak Choprah*

Labels, Judgments, Assumptions
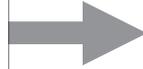
"It's rude to play your music so late at night."

Observations

"I hear music coming through my closed windows at 10:00 at night when I'm trying to fall asleep."

Feeling Victimized/Assigning Blame

"I feel disrespected by your lack of consideration."

Feelings

"I'm feeling tired and worried."

Expectations, Shoulds, Shouldn'ts, Blame

"Good neighbors know that they should turn off their music by 9:00."

Needs/Values

"I start work at 7:00 and I really need nine hours of sleep in order to feel rested."

Demands

"You need to turn it off by 9:00 or I'll have to call the police."

Requests

"Would you be willing to talk about a solution that works for both of us?"

The following typical responses often fail to communicate that we hear and understand the person.

- **Advising**
  "You should get a second opinion from another doctor."

- **Consoling**
  "Don't feel bad, it wasn't your fault."

- **Interrogating**
  "How long have you felt this way?"

- **Correcting and Invalidating**
  "You must have misunderstood, I'm sure your boss didn't mean it."

- **Shifting the Attention**
  "That happened to me last week! It was so bad."

- **Diagnosing**
  "I think you are really angry at your mother and that's why you…"

- **Agreeing with Judgmental Thinking**
  "You're right, he's a real jerk for saying that to you!"

- **Sympathizing**
  "I know exactly how you feel. I feel the same way."

- **Reassuring**
  "You'll be okay, I'm sure."

The following are ways to convey your desire to understand.

- **Silent Listening**
  Giving your undivided attention.

- **Reflecting**
  "I heard you say that you are upset about…"
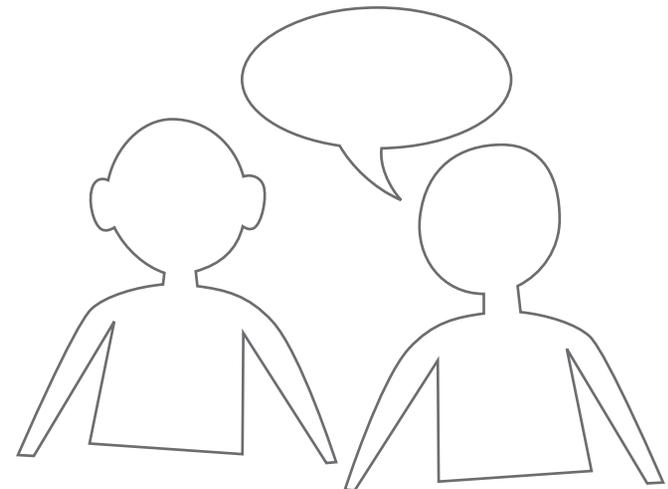
- **Empathetic Guessing**
  "Are you feeling _____ ?"
  (frustrated, surprised, confused, etc.)

  "And do you need _____ ?"
  (understanding, to be heard, safety, etc.)

- **Direct Inquiry**
  "What would you like me to know?"

We listen to ourselves with the same care and compassion we give to loved ones and friends. It's helpful to remember our good intentions. Until we feel some self-acceptance, we will not be ready to engage with another person without being defensive.

We ask ourselves, "What are my judgmental thoughts about myself or the other person?" We do this in order to bring those thoughts to the light of day and translate them into:

- "What am I feeling?"
- "What am I needing?"

After discovering your need, try being curious about what the other person might be feeling and needing. This is the empathy bridge between you and the person with whom you are speaking.

Feelings When Needs Are Met

Joyful	Grateful	Content	Engaged
Happy	Thankful	Calm	Interested
Delighted	Touched	Relaxed	Excited
Hopeful	Moved	Satisfied	Fascinated
Inspired	Appreciative	Fulfilled	Empowered

Feelings When Needs Are Not Met

Sad	Angry	Distressed	Afraid
Hopeless	Frustrated	Shame	Worried
Unhappy	Annoyed	Self-conscious	Concerned
Depressed	Irritable	Shocked	Fearful
Miserable	Resentful	Confused	Anxious

Survival
air, food, water, shelter, sleep, touch

Safety
security, protection, consistency, stability, predictability

Health
nutrition, hygiene, rest, movement, space

Belonging
love, acceptance, affection, connection, closeness, intimacy, comfort, to matter

Compassion
empathy, kindness, warmth, forgiveness, understanding

Trust
honesty, integrity, support, reassurance

Autonomy
choice, independence, self-expression, freedom

Contribution to Life
purpose, meaning, serving community

Pleasure
celebration, play, beauty, nature, joy

Serenity
peace, harmony, acceptance, hope

Feelings Mixed with Perceptions

It is helpful to make a distinction between our feelings and what we think/perceive someone is doing to us by avoiding certain words such as:

Attacked	**Disrespected**	**Manipulated**	**Ignored**
Rejected	**Unappreciated**	**Left out**	**Ripped off**

For example: When we say "I feel ignored by you," we are placing all responsibility for how we feel on the other person.

Even when another person is acting out of their own emotions and needs, and chooses a counterproductive behavior, we still have a choice in how we respond by identifying our feelings and needs.
For example: [When I think someone is ignoring me] "I feel sad." (or hurt, disappointment, etc.)

Things to keep in mind before speaking:

1. Take the time to practice Self-Empathy.

2. Your intention is to connect, not judge or make wrong.

3. People's actions—even the ones you do not like—are their attempts to meet their needs.

Example 1. Manager to Team Member

- **Observation**
  "I see that your project is behind schedule."

- **Feeling**
  "I'm feeling a bit concerned."

- **Need**
  "It would help me to coordinate with the other teams if your project was on schedule."

- **Action Request**
  "Would it work for you to have it ready for me to review tomorrow morning at 11:00?"

Example 2. Caregiver to Client

- **Need**
  "I need some help with a challenging situation. I can't change an appointment I have with my child's teacher."

- **Action Request**
  "Would it work for you if I took off from 2:00 to 3:30 on Wednesday and then came in early on Thursday?"

Example 3. Couple

- **Connecting Request**
  "Is this a good time to talk?"

- **Feeling**
  "I'm feeling sad."

- **Observation**
  "I remember that we had decided to spend the evening together tonight and now I hear you're going out."

- **Need**
  "I was hoping for some company tonight."

- **Connecting Request**
  "How do you feel hearing this?"

  – or–

- **Action Request**
  "Next time you change your plans, will you let me know beforehand? That way I can make some plans for myself."

O F N R
OBSERVATION   FEELING   NEED   REQUEST