

## Nonviolent Communication (NVC) Model

When we communicate please notice:

- The concrete actions we are *observing* that are affecting our well-being
- How we are *feeling* in relation to what we are observing
- The *needs*, values, desires, etc. that are creating our feelings
- The concrete actions we *request* in order to enrich our lives

When we use this model, we may begin either by expressing ourselves or by empathically receiving these four pieces of information from others. It is important to keep in mind that NVC does not consist of a set formula, but adapts to various situations as well as personal and cultural styles. While I conveniently refer to NVC as a "process" or "language," it is possible to experience all four pieces of the model without uttering a single word.

*The essence of NVC is to be found in our consciousness not these four components, not in the actual words that are exchanged.*

Two parts of NVC:

1. Expressing honesty through the four components
2. Receiving empathically through the four components

### Examples:

"John was angry with me yesterday for no reason."

If you understand this to be nonviolent communication we're not in agreement. I consider "for no reason" to be an evaluation. Furthermore, I consider it an evaluation to infer that John was angry. He might have been feeling hurt, scared, sad, or something else.

Examples of observations without evaluation might be: "John told me he was angry," or "John pounded his fist on the table."

"I feel you don't love me."

If you understand this to be nonviolent communication we're not in agreement. I don't consider "you don't love me" to be a feeling. To me, it expresses what the speaker thinks the other person is feeling, rather than how the speaker is feeling. Whenever the words "I feel" are followed by the words "I," "you," "he," "she," "they," "it," "that," "like," or "as if," what follows is generally not what I would consider to be a feeling. Examples of an expression of feeling might be: "I'm sad" or "I'm feeling anguished."

"You irritate me when you leave company documents on the conference room floor."

If you understand this to be nonviolent communication we're not in agreement. To me, the statement implies that the other person's behavior is solely responsible for the speaker's feelings. It doesn't reveal the speaker's needs or thoughts that are contributing to his or her feelings. To do so, the speaker might have said, "I'm irritated when you leave company documents on the conference room floor, because I want our documents to be safely stored and accessible."

"I want you to understand me."

If you understand this to be nonviolent communication we're not in agreement. To me, the word "understand" does not clearly express a specific action being requested. Instead, the speaker might have said, "I want you to tell me what you heard me say."

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