

# What is Nonviolent Direct Action / Communication?

## What is Nonviolence?

Nonviolence works because it inspires, builds trust and opens doors for large numbers of people to get involved and express themselves. It also models the world we want to live in by committing to causing no harm.

Beyond blame and judgement, nonviolence recognizes that all of us are part of this system and that we live interdependently (what happens to you affects me and vice versa) and all of our futures are at stake.

Some core elements of nonviolence are:

- Non-harming.
- Moving beyond blame and judgement to seek to understand the position and perspective of the other.
- Truth-telling from a place of courage, compassion and love.
- Interdependence.
- Self-connection or inner peace.

“Nonviolence is the courage to speak truth with love...and love is the full radical acceptance of the humanity of every person.” - Miki Kashtan

## What is Nonviolent Direct Action?

Nonviolent Direct Action (NVDA) is a strategy of organising in groups to put your bodies in direct contact with or to directly oppose a force that you see as destructive or causing harm. NVDA strategies as we know them now developed out of the Nonviolent campaigns to end British rule of India, most commonly associated with Gandhi, and in the struggle for Civil Rights in the US in the 50s and 60s, most commonly associated with Dr. Martin Luther King.

## What is Nonviolent Communication?

Nonviolent communication (NVC) is another expression of Nonviolence. NVC was developed by Marshall Rosenberg who drew on the humanistic psychology of Carl Rogers and the nonviolence of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, to develop the tools to approach actions and organising in a way that includes your own needs, while considering others' and the needs of the wider environment,

so that unintentional harm is more likely to be avoided.

Some core elements of NVC are:

- Recognising that all humans share the same fundamental needs, no matter how different their strategies for meeting them might be.
  - From this basis, seeing the possibility of connection with all.
  - Moving beyond blame, judgment, 'should' & 'have to'.
  - Communicating from a place of choice.
  - Foregrounding the act of listening, as a precursor for speaking, including to de-escalate tense situations.
  - Expressing yourself by trying to communicate clear observations which aren't disputable instead of emotion-laden and unconscious interpretations.
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