

# Non-Violent Communication(NVC)

“ All that has been integrated into NVC has been known for centuries about consciousness, language, communication skills, and use of power that enable us to maintain a perspective of empathy for ourselves and others, even under trying conditions.

— Marshall B. Rosenberg, Developer of NVC.

Marshall Rosenberg drew on the humanistic psychology of Carl Rogers and the nonviolence of Gandhi and Martin Luther King in the development of NVC.

The practice seeks to help us connect from the heart with ourselves and others and encourages us to find the humanity in everyone. Compassion for ourselves and others is key.

Rather than approaching a disagreement focussed on who is right or wrong, or with the aim of “winning” or avoiding blame, the practice of NVC supports us towards a deeper understanding of ourselves and others that leads to connection rather than conflict.

- Moving beyond blame and judgement.
- Aiming to talk from our direct experience using “I” (or ‘a part of me’) rather than speaking about others.
- Listening before speaking. Rather than rehearsing our counter arguments when someone else is speaking, doing our best, to properly listen to how things are for them.

## Some Core Elements of NVC

- Practising to communicate from observations rather than the assumptions we readily make for ourselves. If we were simply looking at the situation from the outside, perhaps like a martian, what would we observe? For example instead of saying “when you said that to make me feel small” we might say “when you spoke in a louder voice”. It begins to change the story we have made for ourselves about the situation.
- Talk in terms of what feelings arose in you when you heard what someone said or when you saw what they did rather than what you think that says about them. “When you raised your voice I believed/I felt...”
- If and when you feel safe enough to do so you might notice what is alive in you. We can begin to recognise sensations and emotions that are moving through the body. In these

ways we are staying in connection with the changes within us and from that we may be more open to emotions and sensations that may be happening within the people we are communicating with. This can begin to create some openness, curiosity and understanding for ourselves and others. We can also start to see how these emotions are connected to values we hold dear or needs we have, e.g. for communication, or to be heard, or to feel safe.

- We can then communicate our requests to others in a clear way, sharing what we would like to happen rather than demanding they meet our needs.

This is a thumbnail sketch of NVC, see Marshall Rosenbergs' book on Non-Violent Communication for more information and practice exercises. A fuller explanation of NVC is coming **here** soon!

Some of the reasons that people have not, up to now, felt that they can begin working in this way in XR is that the language is new to them and they feel they will 'get it wrong', or be asked to be open when they do not feel it is safe to do so or that someone else will tell them how they feel... perhaps not meeting needs for safety, privacy, understanding or learning? As with all approaches NVC can be used rigidly and without the care and intention to connect that is at the heart of this practice.

In writing this toolkit page we invite rebels to continue to explore this NVC practice together within XR so that we can see how this approach might support our work together.

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