



NON- VIOLENT *APPRECIATIVE, AUTHENTIC COMMUNI CATION

**DEEPEN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS AND
ENHANCE YOUR LIFE-QUALITY NOW!**



ORIGIN OF NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION

It can be traced back to **Dr. Marshall Rosenberg**, a U.S. psychologist to the 1980s. Rosenberg's approach was significantly influenced by his university teacher, the psychotherapist and psychologist **Carl Rogers** and his humanistic *Person-centered Psychotherapy* from the 1950s. Rogers held that every authentic ("congruent") relationship between two people is supporting mental health.

Any encounter in which we can be who we really are, has "corrective," therapeutic effects. Rosenberg worked a lot as a mediator in schools, educational institutions and with street gangs, and further developed NVC with people there. In the late 1990s, NVC also became popular in Europe. It is not a clinical therapy, but a method of self-development.

Also inspired by Rogers, Leslie Greenberg's *Emotion Focused Therapy* (EFT) emerged at the end of the 1980s. In a clinical setting, it uses much the same methods, interventions and approaches as Nonviolent Communication, which is accessible and popular to everyone.

THE INTENTION OF NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATION / NVC

- **To get in contact** with our own feelings and needs and with those of our fellow human beings.
- Authentic, **appreciative communication** to create interpersonal **connection**.
- Reduction of psychological violence and physical violence through self-responsible communication.
- The promotion of **aliveness**, joy, connectedness, peace and **quality of life**.
- Nonviolent Communication is the basic building block of a democratic, egalitarian and peaceful society.
- The strengthening of self-confidence, self-efficacy and **self-responsibility**.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF NVC

- Every action serves to fulfil a need.
- The actions of others are not the cause of our feelings, but the trigger of unfulfilled needs.
- Feelings are the connection to our needs. They lead us to our needs.
- We are only responsible for our own needs, not of those of others.
- If our needs are fulfilled, we are happy, if not, we suffer.
- Every kind of violence is a tragic expression of unfulfilled needs.
- People instinctively enjoy helping others as long as they can do so voluntarily.
- Communication and nurturing peaceful relationships only work when true empathy is present.



It's always about these questions: What is alive in you? And: What would enrich your life?
(Marshall B. Rosenberg)

THRESHOLD TO VIOLENCE

Psychological violence is comparable to physical violence in its effect on our minds. Psychological violence begins when I think I know what is going on in the mind of my counterpart through pure **interpretations**. Judgements, accuses, evaluations, any associated **punishments** also constitute psychological violence. Denying the needs and experience of others is also psychological violence.

CHANGE AS A STATE

We live in a constantly changing world. Nothing is permanent - nothing is simply "always like this". We humans, too, have many parts in us and differently weighted needs. When we judge reality or a person, we "fix" them - we deny their ability to change - we deny the basic features of reality, which means constant change.

Through NVC we can communicate and connect with others - initiating change. **Through authentic, appreciative contact with each other, change occurs** and people change the emphasis of their needs in order to stay connected with us.

We as human beings need connection with others more than almost anything else. We are intrinsically ready to support and connect with other people.

NEEDS

A need is a basic requirement in my life that is necessary for me to feel good. A need is an expression of my individual personality and cannot be turned off.

All people have the same basic needs, which have different priorities depending on their situation in life.

Depending on situation, knowledge, education and our individual life experiences, we pursue **different strategies to fulfil our needs**.

Some basic needs: connection, security, care, appreciation, clarity, attention, being heard, harmony, friendship, support, freedom, autonomy, health, recognition, respect, differentiation, expression, creativity, care, security, solidarity, equality, future, lightness, fun, knowledge, experience, closeness, touch, understanding, aims, community, truth, alone-time

Our personality consists of different so-called "**parts**". These parts stand for the fulfilment of certain needs and are linked to experiences about it. They want to make sure that we get what we need. By means of action strategies, we pursue the various needs. Depending on the life situation, the parts / needs are weighted differently.



If we have needs that are opposed in themselves or are also opposed in their strategy, we speak of an "inner conflict". In this case we are stuck inside. Examples for inner conflicts are for example: a need for closeness, but at the same time for separation, for freedom and at the same time security in the bond, or the need to fulfil one's own needs, but at the same time to stay connected with others.

We can change our strategies, but not our needs.

MEANING OF FEELINGS

Feelings are the connection between us and the outside world. They are connected to unconscious parts of us and inform us immediately when needs are fulfilled or unfulfilled, even if we are not yet aware of it.

Through our feelings we can understand our needs and can communicate them in this way. We are often not even aware of our feelings.

The aim is to connect with one's feelings already at a very low level, to consciously perceive and allow them - and to communicate and act accordingly.

Whatever the feeling is - pain or joy - it is a gift and its beauty lies in the fact that it shows you that you are alive. The goal in life is not to always be happy, but to laugh all our laughter and cry all our tears. Whatever is revealed in us, it is life that is revealed in it. (Marshall B. Rosenberg)

BASIC FEELINGS IN NVC

ANGER: My needs are not met right NOW.
Something is happening right now where my needs are not being met.

SADNESS: Something happened in the PAST where my needs were not met, now there is nothing I can do about it.

FEAR: I imagine that something could happen in the FUTURE where my needs are not met.

HAPPINESS/JOY: My needs are met right NOW.

Joy and anger are thus the most creative feelings for us humans, as they refer to our current experience.

They help us to say "yes" or "no" in the here and now. They are thus sources of information about what we need - they want to protect us and **help us shape our lives so that our needs are met.**



Feelings lead to the release of bio-chemical transmitters, hormones and messenger substances in our body. These lead to us feeling "good" or "bad". By **observing our bodily sensations**, we can perceive emotional states of which we are not yet aware. This observation we call "focusing".

Many **illnesses** arise as a result of inner tension and stress due to unconscious feelings that have not been acted out.

ABOUT ANGER

Like any emotion, anger has different gradations of intensity - it ranges from an "irritation" or a "dislike" to a "raging" or "fury".

Every feeling, including anger, is an impulse within us that informs us of our needs.

Anger is a feeling that informs us that something is not fulfilled right now. **Anger is there because it protects something that is very important to us.** Anger is a part of us and supports us to say "no". Anger is our ally.

Because of the need for belonging, connection and harmony with other people, we tend to ignore our feeling of anger - we suppress it unconsciously. In addition, we may sometimes have experienced being punished for showing anger.

When we hold anger in, our body is already flooded with stress hormones like cortisol and also adrenaline - **we feel physically bad** and then tend to react accordingly affectively, reproachfully, violently, because we lose "control" over ourselves. Such "rageful" reactions are often the expression of repressed anger. We then feel ashamed of our anger and condemn it as "destructive, primitive, stupid, aggressive..." etc. and continue to suppress the anger.

Showing anger is taboo in our society - because most of the time we show our anger by attacking and blaming our opposite.

Instead of saying "you", we say "I".

Example: *You make me angry! You are a real tormentor.*

NVC: *I'm angry because I need silence! Can you please be quieter?*

The aim of NVC is to express what bothers us, what we don't like and don't want much earlier and to connect with our anger/annoyance/dissatisfaction/irritation.

The perception of our own anger is the most important compass to steer our lives where we want to go. It is the access to the creative power within us and the **basic ability for setting boundaries.**

People whose ability to feel and express their anger has been restricted by criticism and punishment usually have difficulties in separating themselves from the needs and the actions



of other people. As a result, they more often get into situations they do not want to be in, because those around them are not adequately informed about what they do not want.

WHAT IS A "RESISTANCE"?

A resistance is a very low-threshold perception of anger as a feeling. It is an irritation because we are missing something. We feel within ourselves that we do not like or do not want something. The aim of NVC is to consciously perceive such resistances/irritations as impulses and to raise awareness of the physical perception of a resistance (=the feeling of anger) in our body.

Through attention ("mindfulness") we can more and more deeply regain our ability to fully perceive, appreciate and allow all feelings again, because we recognize them as a valuable experience of our individual needs, our personality.

EXPERIENCE & IMPULSES

The aim of the NVC attitude is to listen to all one's inner impulses and to fully appreciate them. **NVC means appreciating our own individual experience of reality.** We have the confidence that we can and may express any form of **impulse** within us. **We are allowed to show ourselves as we really are.** We trust our impulses and appreciate the impulses of other people, as long as they are non-violent. We are in full contact with ourselves.

Through **body-based practices** such as QiGong, meditation, dance, breathing techniques, we can sharpen our presence in the here and now and get closer to our deeper emotional experience.

We are asking ourselves the following questions:

What is alive in me right now?

What do I need to improve my quality of life?

CENSORED & UNCONSCIOUS FEELINGS

In our childhood, in schools, at universities, in partnerships, in our working lives, we were often told that certain feelings were undesirable. We have been rejected with our needs. As a result, we do not perceive certain feelings well, unconsciously suppress them because they have not proven to be useful or we have learned that we will be punished for them.

As children, we were at the mercy of our caregivers. But **as adults we can transform these experiences** and become active creators.

Such experiences in which we have learned that the way we feel and what we need is "not ok" form our individual "vulnerability".

Feelings do not need justification. (Marshall B. Rosenberg)



EXPRESSING FEELINGS GRADUALLY

Expressing anger:

I don't like...

I don't want...

It bothers me...

I'm irritated when... because...

I'm annoyed when... because...

I'm angry when... because...

I'm angry when... because...

Stop! Stop! No! Stop it now!

Expressing fear:

I'm insecure...

I'm worried...when I see..., because,...

I fear...

I'm afraid that, ... because...

Expressing joy:

I like...

I celebrate that...

I'm happy...

I'm excited...

Expressing sadness:

I'm concerned when,... because... / This makes me concerned....

I find it a pity,... that, ...how...I

I regret....

I am saddened when,... because...

SAYING YES: THE POWER OF APPRECIATION

With the power of anger, we can clearly and decisively say "no" and shape our lives. Equally important is the expression of joy ("yes!") in the form of appreciation - in both ways we show our counterpart what we need. **Appreciation is the "glue of society" and of every relationship.**

When we say what we appreciate and like in the other person, we create security and **connection, which every human being seeks.** We are also saying what we need. By expressing appreciation, we connect deeper to our feeling of joy. **Appreciation is the expression of our aliveness and connectedness with others.**

Expressing appreciation

I'm happy that you... because...

I appreciate you for...



I'm fulfilled when you...
I'm touched when you,... because....
I thank you for... because...
I'm moved...because
I like that / about you...because

THE ATTITUDE OF NVC

NVC is not a technique. It is a way of looking at ourselves and our relationships. The focus is on appreciation for our own feelings and the experience of others. The approach to life of NVC, besides **appreciation**, consists of:

COMPASSION - we try to give ourselves compassion for our experience and the experience of others. This means that we validate individual experience because we can understand it.

TRANSPARENCY - we are responsible to show ourselves with our experience so that others can respond to it. We make ourselves "transparent" with our experience and let others see what we feel and what we need without making them responsible for it.

TRUST - we trust our own feelings and that if we are authentic with them, the likelihood of connection and to receive support increases.

VULNERABILITY - it is the core of our strength. It is the area where we fear being punished and rejected for who we are. When we show ourselves vulnerable, we transform this fear into creative power and corrective experiences.

CURIOSITY - we are curious to explore within ourselves and others and to find out what is at the core of feelings and what are the needs behind them. What do we actually need? What does the other person need?

SELF RESPONSIBILITY - only we ourselves are responsible for meeting our needs. We can only inform and ask others to support us in meeting our needs and to change their strategies to do so.

PRESENCE - we are attentive to what is happening within us. We can actively listen without judgement and speak consciously, connected to ourselves. We give our presence to others to understand them and just to be connected.

ACCEPTANCE - we accept that other people's actions are attempts to meet their needs as best they can. People are happy to support us if they do it voluntarily. Everyone is allowed to say "no" to our request.

All these values form the appreciative attitude of NVC - together they are appreciation.



THE FOUR STEPS OF NVC

Each step is the establishment of a fundamental level of connection between two people.

Since **feelings and needs are universal and everyone** in the world can understand them, communication that builds on this is very clear and understandable. It creates connection. If we also agree about what we have observe, then the chances of a deep connection on all essential levels increase. In doing so, we express ourselves authentically and listen attentively with empathy.

OBSERVATION: We communicate what we perceive (the action of a counterpart, a situation) without interpreting or judging it. We simply say what we have seen or heard (sometimes there is already a misunderstanding here).

FEELING: From this observation we listen to ourselves and try to find out which primary feelings (anger, sadness, fear or joy) are currently perceptible in us. We then communicate clearly which feeling is there.

NEED: The connection to our feelings helps us to recognise the (unfulfilled) needs behind them. We can thus see clearly what we need. We also communicate this.

REQUEST: Finally, we make a request to the other person based on the need. It is important that this request relates to the here and now and is concretely realisable. The other person always has the free choice to fulfil our request. Of course, we can also ask what the other person observes, feels and needs in order to enter into a real exchange.

OBSERVATION - FEELING - NEED - REQUEST = MINDFULNESS - CONNECTION - INSIGHT - ACTION!

Marshall Rosenberg summarises the steps in the following sentence:

"When I see, I feel because I need. Therefore, I would now like to ..."

Being mindful of our experience of emotions leads to connection with ourselves, to awareness of what we need right now, and to responsible action.

In the same way, being attentive to other people's feelings leads us to their needs, which allows us to connect and find strategies together.

TWO WAYS TO SOLVE CONFLICTS

A: We go into transparency (show ourselves) using the Four Steps, presenting to our counterpart what we have perceived, what we feel and what we need. We thus enter into contact with ourselves.

When we have shown ourselves, we can now ask questions to our counterpart. If we have made a request that our counterpart does not want to fulfil, then we try to get into deeper contact with him/her.



B: We try to get into contact with our counterpart. In doing so, we want to find out about their feelings and needs. We also proceed according to the Four Steps.

I see that you... do this and that...
or: You just told me that...
or: What did you see, perceive...?
Are you upset right now? What's going on inside you?
Why are you ...upset/sad...?
What do you need from me to make you feel better?

Further strategies for uncovering and getting in touch with a person's observation, feelings, and needs:

OFFERING & ASKING

Are you angry?
You say you're angry - is it because you need quiet?
You look angry to me because your forehead is furrowed.
What can I do to make you feel calm?
You say you can't do it, why not, what do you perceive?
Do you not want to go to school because you want to be free?

PARAPHRASING & MIRRORING

You say the others are all idiots.
There are tears in your eyes when you say that.
You told me that... what do you feel when you see it like that?
You say you're sad. I see how sad you are.
You say you're angry because you don't want to go to school.

OTHER QUESTIONS

What do you need?
What is alive in you right now?
What are you feeling right now?
What specifically do you want me to do?
Why do you want that?

TAKE ACTION ON YOUR DREAMS!



SHAME & GUILT

Shame is the most destructive state for ourselves. It means "I did something for what I deserve punishment". Shame consists of fear and sadness.

We are afraid of punishment and of being excluded from the relationship, community or society and thus not getting protection, appreciation, care. **We are afraid to end up alone.**

We feel ashamed when our behaviour does not correspond to the norms and expectations of others whose care and closeness we need. Out of fear of shame and punishment, we then do not behave authentically, speak and act contrary to our inner conviction and truth in order to fulfil our most important **need for closeness**, belonging and protection.

Guilt is based on the thinking that what is right for me or for the community is also right for everyone else and that whoever acts "wrongly" deserves to be punished so that they adapt their behaviour to the needs of others.

Shame and guilt are the most common means of enforcing the fulfilment of needs.

Accusations, comparisons, demands, devaluations and invalidation of the other person's needs are used to force our need fulfilment.

We are no longer connected to our feelings, to what we really feel. In reality, we are afraid to touch something profound. (Erich Fromm, German psychotherapist)

AUTHORITARIAN AND EGALITARIAN RELATIONS

= how we want to meet our needs

Everything in life is in relationship. The relationship with ourselves, with the outside world and with our fellow human beings.

Either we have learned that we can realise our needs "in contact" with other people and that our experience is recognised by others, or we have learned that we can only realise our own needs by invalidating/devaluing the experience and needs of others.

This result are two models, i.e. individual views on relationships:

The egalitarian model: strives to connect with and value the diversity of needs and strategies of others. Strives for power together with inclusion of the other.

The authoritarian model: seeks to control and devalue experience and the needs of others. The authoritarian relationship model is not appreciative of other people's individual needs. Strives for power over people.

Examples of authoritarian systems:



Dictatorship, empire, church, patriarchy, fascism, nationalism, fanaticism, superstition, capitalism, school, and any systemic form of human rights violation or discrimination.

Some countries where authoritarian persons/systems are in power (2022):
Venezuela, Russia, Poland, Hungary, Sudan, Egypt, Iran, Brazil, China, Saudi Arabia, Cuba, Belarus, North Korea, The Vatican, ...

The so-called "**authoritarian personality**" tries to fulfill its needs with power and force. It has no confidence that needs can be met on a voluntary basis. In doing so, the authoritarian personality has the goal of gaining power over other people. This may be through normative "success," "status," or ideology. Static language is used to claim power. Hierarchies are thereby created or consolidated, relegating the counterpart to a subordinate place. Feelings or individual needs of the counterpart and sensitivities play no role for the authoritarian personality.

People who have experienced that their feelings and needs are rejected by their close attachment partners (in childhood) can also tend to be authoritarian and thus psychologically violent towards their fellow human beings and attachment partners.

The "**egalitarian personality**" is connected to and expresses one's own feelings. Likewise, it is appreciative of the feelings and needs of others. She trusts that needs can be settled in contact through openness and self-revelation. The egalitarian person is appreciative of the individuality of others and does not aim to place himself above them. He can separate himself and fulfill his needs independently without invalidating those of others.

Constructive (facilitative) authority

The basic needs-protective use of power and force.

Examples: Protecting someone from an attacker or an accident by using physical force.

Supporting a child in its full development by encouraging and protecting the use of power so that it becomes just as strong and big as you are.

LANGUAGE & POWER

NVC does not aim to achieve "**power over others**" but rather to "**have power together**". In the course of our culture, which emerges from authoritarian systems such as the kingdom and the church, a language has been formed to implement the authoritarian claim to power. This is called "**static language**". It is used to exercise power over people and is violent in its simplicity.

Static language is built on the assumption that there is such a thing as "**right & wrong**" as well as "**good & evil**" exist. It makes subjective experience the truth and invalidates the perception of other people. It devalues the other person.

Static language of right and wrong, good and evil is the basis for violence. It justifies violence. For those who act "wrongly" deserve punishment. Our prisons are full of hopeless



people who have done "wrong". They are punished as "bad" people for their "wrong" strategies. Unfortunately, most of them relapse.

BEING RIGHT: Often when we talk about our needs, it is a battle of arguments. The goal is to make the other person realize that he is not right. Then our needs are valid, the needs of the other person are not. In the process, one person always falls by the wayside. The one who is right and makes it "right" is allowed to dictate to the others, who are wrong, what has to be.

Arguments are expressed in **impersonal language** with phrases like: "one must; one should; you should; you must; one does it this way; one has to; we do it this way; it is this way" - thereby the individual need is veiled. Different: "*I want you to do this, because...*" (NVC).

PUNISHMENT: any form of devaluation. **Punitive behaviour** begins with the withdrawal of closeness & attention, with turning away, with ignoring. If you devalue a person or a group, in the end the use of ultimate violence - "the extermination of the enemies" - also seems to be the "right" way. Our world is unfortunately full of warlike conflicts which are a sad expression of our inability to deal with contrary needs. **The basis of every war, of every violence, lies in a failure of communication.**

Psychological violence by denying the experience of people leads to the assumptions:

THE WAY I AM, I AM NOT OK. I'M WRONG.

I HAVE TO HIDE, THE WAY I AM.

THE WAY I AM, I WILL BE PUNISHED AND REJECTED.

This results in further assumptions about relationships:

- I MUST MEET THE NEEDS OF OTHERS IN ORDER TO BE CONNECTED
- I MUST PUT MY NEEDS LAST (submission)
- I GET ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY WORKING HARD
/ FULFILLING THE NEEDS OF OTHERS (submission)
- I MUST MAKE OTHERS FULFILL MY NEEDS, I NEED TO BE ALWAYS RIGHT (dominance)
- IF I HAVE POWER, OTHERS MUST OBEY AND MEET MY NEEDS (dominance)
- IF I DO IT RIGHT, I DESERVE RECOGNITION (submission/dominance)
- I GET ACKNOWLEDGMENT WHEN I COMPLY WITH EXPECTATIONS / STANDARDS
(submission)

The result are non-transparent coping strategies - that is, actions to meet our needs for recognition, security, attachment, closeness, appreciation, but built on manipulation, control, pressure to perform, and new violence. Many people whose experience was punished by their parents, partners develop strong fears, **narcissistic personality traits** and even **mental illness**. According to studies, around 50% of people in Germany have authoritarian tendencies in the form of dominance/submission. (Leipzig Authoritarianism Study)

THE CHILD'S THINKING

The child is totally dependent on its attachment partners for its survival and need fulfillment. It understands that it cannot survive if it does not receive care from its parents or if it is



abandoned. The child thinks: You are responsible for my needs. This is also called early childhood narcissism. As adults we learn that only we ourselves are responsible for our needs.

If people have suffered in this development towards **independent fulfillment of needs and self-confident expression of feelings** through authoritarian upbringing, they may continue to blame their environment for the fulfillment of their needs, just as a child does. As a result, they can easily become perpetrators of psychological violence. This is what we want to transform with NVC.

Immature love: "I love you because I need you."

Mature love: "I love you because you are you."

Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving, 1956

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO POWER?



AUTORITARIAN LANGUAGE - EXAMPLES

Static language forms the basis for violence and justifies it.

judgements:	<i>He's like this. She is pretty. They are stupid.</i>
expectations:	<i>Someone like you should know how to behave.</i>
demands:	<i>You have to do this, otherwise you get nothing.</i>
accusations:	<i>You are bad and unlovable. You hurt me.</i>
comparisons:	<i>He does that, but you don't.</i>
diagnoses, analyses:	<i>You look like you should do this and that.</i>
arguments:	<i>Historically seen, as a British, I am right.</i>
shame & guilt:	<i>Be ashamed of it. One doesn't do that.</i>
punishments & rewards:	<i>If you are silent, you get what you want.</i>

Lack of self-revelation - one keeps oneself hidden behind sentences that refer to "one must; one should; one has to". Static language prefers to speak of "you" rather than the "I". With NVC, we want to support the ability and courage for self-revelation and avoid so-called facade techniques.

further examples for authoritarian language

- *"The problem with you is that you're too selfish."*
- *"She is lazy."*
- *"It is wrong."*
- *"If you don't help me, I won't lend it to you."* - demand with punishment
- *"It is going to be a shame if you don't show up."* - demand with blame
- *"Why can't you be like your brother?"* - comparison
- *"You are so stupid."* - labelling and insult
- *"You are so intelligent."* - positive labelling
- *"You have to attend school until you're 16."* - demand language

DENIAL OF OWN RESPONSIBILITY

We are each responsible only for our own thoughts, feelings, and actions. Yet we often act as if others are responsible for our actions.

examples for denial of responsibility:

- *"I cleaned my room because I had to."* - impersonal forces.
- *"I drink because I am alcoholic."* - diagnosis or psychological history.
- *"I hit my child because he ran into the street."* - action of others.
- *"I lied because my boss told me to."* - dictates of authority.
- *"I start smoking because all my friends did."* - group pressure.
- *"I have to suspend you because it is the school policy."* - institutional policies rules, and regulations.
- *"I do it because I am a husband and a father."* - gender, social, or age roles.



Denial of responsibility by using impersonal pronouns

- *"It really infuriates me when spelling mistakes appear in our public brochures."*
- *"I feel infuriated when spelling mistakes like that appear in our public brochures, because I want our company to project a professional image." - NVC*
- *"That bugs me a lot." - denial responsibility*
- *"Little things people say sometimes hurt me." - denial responsibility*
- *"Sometimes when people say little things, I feel hurt because I want to be appreciated, not criticized." - NVC*

Denial of responsibility by mention only the actions of others

- *"When you don't call me on my birthday, I feel hurt."*
- *"Mommy is disappointed when you don't finish your food."*
- *"Mommy feels disappointed when you don't finish your food, because I want you to grow up strong and healthy." - NVC*
- *"You irritate me when you leave company documents on the conference room floor."*
- *"I'm irritated when you leave company documents on the conference floor, because I want our documents to be safely stored and accessible." - NVC*
- *"I feel frustrated when you come late."*
- *"I feel frustrated when you come late, because I was hoping we'd be able to get some front-row seats." - NVC*

Denial of responsibility by "I feel ... because you"

- *"I feel hurt because you don't love me."*
- *"I feel angry because the supervisor broke her promise."*
- *"I feel angry when the supervisor broke her promise, because I was counting on getting that long weekend to visit my brother." - NVC*
- *"I feel disappointed because you said you would do it and you didn't."*
- *"When you said you'd do it and then didn't, I feel disappointed because I want to be able to rely upon your words." - NVC*

Seeing the beauty in a person is most necessary when he communicates in a way that makes it most difficult to see. (Marshall B. Rosenberg)

DESERVE REWARD / PUNISHMENT

Static communication is also associated with the concept that certain actions merit reward while others merit punishment. Underlying this is the abstract and surreal concept of "right and wrong" & "good and evil".

Our media, the movies, politics are full of stories in which the "bad guys" are defeated, punished or even wiped out by the "good guys". A young person sees several such depictions of punishment and extermination on television/internet every day. That is hundreds of murders per year that a person "consumes" in this way. This cultural formation of



the mind leads to a willingness to use violence against strangers and to blind pressure to conform, consumerism, nationalism, religious fanaticism, etc.

The "narrative" of right & wrong, good & evil, is a **hyper-simplification of the complex reality** in the world around us. It is a childish immature (narcissistic) view of other people that cannot recognize actual motives and the experience of other people.

Through punishment, by means of violence, we want other people to change their behavior and give up their needs. Such violence always generates further violence. We are not able to "get in touch", that is, to connect with the actual experience, the actual feelings and needs of other people, but devalue them. The maximum escalation of such narratives and such mindset is murder or genocide.

Examples

- *"He deserves to be punished for what he did."* - It assumes "badness" and calls for punishment to make them repent and change their behavior.
- *"People who hurt others deserve to be punished."* - *deserve oriented language*
- *"Students who are smart and hardworking will be honored."* - *Assessment, merit-based language*
- *"They are evil, bad, primitive people."*
- *"Football fans are violent and stupid."*
- *"Russians are murderers - Russia should be destroyed."*

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU EXERCISED POWER OVER ANOTHER PERSON?

OBSERVING WITHOUT JUDGING

One specific thing that a person does or did is what I call an **observation**. In NVC we want to observe without judging and evaluating - we are just present and "here" and observe. What do people do that we either like or don't like? We want to communicate the behavior without mixing in a diagnosis, judgment, or evaluation. **Our pure, value-free presence is the greatest gift we can give to another person.**

JUDGEMENT VS OBSERVATION

- *"John was angry with me yesterday for no reason."* - *evaluation*
- *"John told me he was angry"* - *observation*
- *"John pounded his fist on the table"* - *observation*
- *"My father is a good man."* - *evaluation*
- *"For the last 25 years my father has given one tenth of his salary to charity."* - *observation*
- *"Janice work too much."* - *evaluation*



- *"Janice spent over 60 hours at the office this week."* - observation
- *"Henry is aggressive."* - evaluation
- *"Henry hit his sister when she switched the television channel."* - observation
- *"You are a responsible child."* - evaluation (positive labeling)
- *"You are too generous."* - evaluation (positive labeling)
- *"When I see you doing that I think you being too generous"* - NVC
- *"You are going to fall"* - evaluation (statement with no possibilities)
- *"Be careful, I fear that you could fall"* - NVC
- *"He is a poor soccer player"* - evaluation (negative label)
- *"He has not scored a goal in 20 games"* - NVC (observation)
- *"My son often doesn't brush his teeth."* - evaluation
- *"Twice this week my son didn't brush his teeth before going to bed."* - observation
- *"Luke told me I didn't look good in yellow."* - observation
- *"Pam was first in line every day this week."* - observation
- *"My aunt complains when I talk with her."* - evaluation
- *"My aunt called me three times this week, and each time talked about people who treated her in ways she didn't like."* - observation
- *"My husband hardly express any affection."* - evaluation
- *"My husband hasn't kissed me for two weeks."* - observation
- *"You are arguing with me for the fourth time this week."* - evaluation
- *"This is the fourth time this week that you stated you disagree with something I'm saying."* - observation
- *"They are destroying the environment."* - evaluation
- *"They have cut over 90% of this territory, and are still continuing."* - observation
- *"The doctor refuses to explain anything to me."* - evaluation
- *"The doctor did not say anything to me about what causes the pain or what can be done."* - observation

GET IT REAL!



VULNERABILITY

By this we mean the area of our feelings and needs for which we are ashamed in front of others and where we are **afraid of being punished for how we feel**, what we need through withdrawal of appreciation and closeness.

We are therefore **afraid of being "hurt" (=evaluated/rejected)** if we show ourselves genuinely.

"Remaining vulnerable is a risk we must take if we are to experience real connection."
(Brené Brown, US Psychologist & Author)

Our own "vulnerability" is the absolute core of our drive in life. We try to avert situations in which we have been devalued through our work, status and hierarchies in our lives. Through the way we communicate in relationships, we try to protect ourselves from potential vulnerability.

Our own vulnerability, that is, the fear of being rejected and devalued, is a core of communication in Nonviolent Communication and the core of psychological health and strength. It is our "construction site" at which we can transform our past hurts into creative and powerful actions in the present, creating corrective experiences that change us.

To show up with our vulnerability we need the will and courage to self-reveal and the appreciative, appreciative connection to our feelings - our impulses.

Vulnerability = *"this is so important to me, but I'm afraid of being punished for it".*

Self-revelation means not to deceive oneself and to become clairaudient for one's own inner world. (Friedemann Schulz von Thun, Communication Psychologist)

Example for making vulnerability transparent

Jan: What's with all the crumbs in the kitchen again?!

Ana: What is it?

Jan: You are so messy, worse than your sister!

Ana: Excuse me? How come you mention my sister?

Jan: I always have to clean up after you. You don't care, you just lie lazy on the couch.

Ana: I am totally annoyed. You are making insinuations. You say I'm lazy and always leave you work. That bothers me! I don't want to be accused by you and it bothers me that you compare me to my sister. I don't want that. It bothers me a lot because I don't want to be compared to her. Can you talk to me like this without accusing me of bad intentions and telling me that I am lazy? Can you please stop comparing me to my sister?

Jan: you never clean the apartment.

Ana: now I've had enough, it annoys me that you reproach me again. I don't want to hear it like this. Are you upset because you saw the crumbs?

Jan: Yes, I'm really angry at you.



Ana: *Why are you angry?*

Jan: *Because you never clean.*

Ana: *Are you angry because you see that I always leave something?*

Jan: *No, because everything always falls on me. You already have responsibility.*

Ana: *Are you angry because you wish you had more help keeping things clean?*

Jan: *I don't want to have to do everything by myself.*

Ana: *Does it make you sad when you do everything alone.*

Jan: *Yes.*

Ana: *Do you wish you were more connected to me?*

Jan: *Yes.*

Ana: *What can I do next time?*

Jan: *Let's make a day where we clean together.*

Ana: *OK. - But it really pisses me off when you insinuate that I'm lazy and compare me. I don't want to do that. Can you just say next time that you're angry or sad without blaming me?*

Jan: *I can try.*

Ana: *Thank you.*

Example NVC in company language

1:

The boss decides to give the implementation of a project to another employee.

Boss: *I saw your project submission and I liked this and these elements. But I have heard from other project managers that the last two times you were late with the implementation of the project. That scares me a little bit that we won't be able to keep up with the schedule because of that. What do you have to say about that?*

Employee: *Yes, that's right, I was late the last few times because my father was sick and I was very stressed and tied up because of that.*

Boss: *Hmm, I can understand that. They just wanted to take care.*

Employee: *Yes. I can promise you I'll make it on time this time.*

Boss: *I'm sorry about that, I can see that you want to make an effort. But the risk is too high for me that it won't work out again. I'm afraid that we would have real difficulties then. I would give it to another employee, because I just need to be sure that it will work out.*

Employee: *Hmm, too bad.*

Boss: *We can talk about it again on the next project.*

Employee: *All right.*



Static language:

Boss: *We have decided, according to company policy, not to assign you the project.*

Employee: *But why?*

Boss: *Because we got bad feedback about you not being reliable.*

Employee: *But I didn't even take sick leave this year! Who says that?*

Boss: *I'm sorry, there's nothing I can do for you.*

2:

A company's hired lawyer has a breach of contract to prosecute.

Lawyer: *Looking at the case, I'm really upset that you broke this clause from the contract. I'm in charge here of making sure the contracts are followed so we can plan well. I'm sorry, but because of our clause, I'm going to fine you because I want to make sure that this kind of thing doesn't happen again and that we can rely on our partners. Can you understand that?*

Static Language:

Lawyer: *Because of clause 2B, you will be fined. Our contracts are to be implemented without exception. Any breach will be punished.*

Example NVC with children

Single mother comes home to find her two sons (10 & 12) bouncing around on the sofa. They have scattered their toys all over the room, there is disorder, while loud music is playing from the TV. The mother is completely upset when she sees this and starts screaming:

Mother: *I'm totally overloaded, i am so mad when i come home and see what a mess is here, I can't go on like this because i just need rest after a hard day at work!!!! Why does you do this?*

Children: *We forgot when you were coming, we wanted to clean up....*

Mother: *I understand. Could you please play in your room next time, that I can relax better here?*

Children: *Hmm yes.*

Static language:



Mother: *I am really bad! This is really the last! Tomorrow there will be no more TV! You don't do that, it's not right!*

The children go to their room ashamed and slam the door.

DYNAMIC LANGUAGE

- Sees communication as a process of raising awareness.
- Wants to get in touch with the feelings and needs of the other person.
- Accept change as part of life.
- Observed without judging.
- Is characterised by curiosity and goodwill.
- Is actively appreciative.
- Is questioning. Listens.
- Is not rigid and prescriptive.
- Is self-responsible - does not make others responsible for what we need.
- Is full of self-revelation and transparency.
- Accepts individual needs as an expression of vitality and diversity.
- Promotes connection and contact.
- Speaks about what we perceive, feel, need.

#KEYWORDS STATIC LANGUAGE / AUTHORITARIANISM

rigid, one-sided, authoritarian, fearful, reproachful, heavy, aggressive, stuck, opaque, violent, black and white, judgmental, exclusionary, condescending, hurtful, listless, insulted, insulting, lonely, fanatical, blind, unloving, lifeless, criminal, phony, irresponsible, manipulative, shameful, cowardly, unappreciative, ignorant, punitive, divisive, cold-hearted, insensitive, misleading, one-sided

#KEYWORDS DYNAMIC LANGUAGE / NVC

connecting, energetic, curious, observing, genuine, connected, changing, appreciative, accepting, compassionate, inclusive, peaceful, hopeful, confident, self-efficacious, vibrant, clear, transparent, self-revealing, acknowledging, experiencing, emphatic, diverse, individual, joyful, soulful, self-centred, in touch, touching, moving, allowing, understanding

Not everything that is real I want to say, but what I say should be real." (Ruth Charlotte Cohn, German psychoanalyst)



SELF-COMPASSION - HOW DO WE TALK TO OURSELVES?

At the heart of Nonviolent Communication is also the appreciation of ourselves and our own experience. When we perceive difficult feelings, we can simply appreciate them because they stand for something that is simply important to us. They are an expression of our aliveness and individuality.

The NVC attitude acknowledges our full experience and that of others.

The most significant application of NVC is probably in the way we treat ourselves.

Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg



COACHING IN NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION



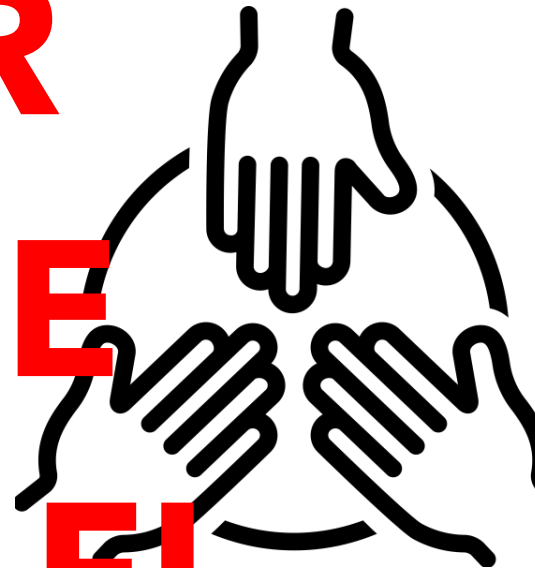
In my work as a communications consultant and coach for NVC, I support my clients in deepening their experience of feelings and needs through everyday situations. By means of numerous interventions, role plays and challenging games we reach towards more experience, connection and deeper insight and can make the inner visible and free it.

In doing so, I support you in communicating authentically with true force, and together we clarify new strategies with which you can fulfil your needs to deepen the quality of your life, right now.

Filip Malinowski, NVC-Coach, Berlin
we-space.net



DO YOUR THING! BE YOURSELF!



NVC COURSES & COACHING:

[WE-SPACE.NET/NON-VIOLENT-COMMUNICATION-NVC-IN-BERLIN/](https://we-space.net/non-violent-communication-nvc-in-berlin/)

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