

Nonviolent Communication - A Language of Life

Author	Goodreads Link	Rating
Marshall B. Rosenberg	https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3601593-non-violent-communication-a-language-of-life?ac=1&from_search=true&qid=fDOrmpafwj&rank=1	*

Favorite Quotes

We "say a lot" by listening for other people's feelings and needs."

Express appreciation to celebrate, not to manipulate.

Overview

What is Violent Communication?

If "violent" means acting in ways that result in hurt or harm, then much of how we communicate—judging others, bullying, having racial bias, blaming, finger pointing, discriminating, speaking without listening, criticizing others or ourselves, name-calling, reacting when angry, using political rhetoric, being defensive or judging who's "good/bad" or what's "right/wrong" with people—could indeed be called "violent communication."

What is Nonviolent Communication? Nonviolent Communication is the integration of four things:

- **Consciousness:** a set of principles that support living a life of compassion, collaboration, courage, and authenticity
- **Language:** understanding how words contribute to connection or distance
- **Communication:** knowing how to ask for what we want, how to hear others even in disagreement, and how to move toward solutions that work for all

- Means of influence: sharing "power with others" rather than using "power over others"

Nonviolent Communication serves our desire to do three things:

- Increase our ability to live with choice, meaning, and connection
- Connect empathically with self and others to have more satisfying relationships
- Sharing of resources so everyone is able to benefit

Notes

Introduction

NVC: a way of communicating that leads us to give from the heart.

The NVC Process

Four components of NVC: 1. observations 2. feelings 3. needs 4. requests

NVC Process The concrete actions we observe that affect our well-being How we feel in relation to what we observe The needs, values, desires, etc. that create our feelings The concrete actions we request in order to enrich our lives

Two parts of NVC: expressing honestly through the four components receiving empathically through the four components

Moralistic Judgments

Analyses of others are actually expressions of our own needs and values.

Denial of Responsibility

We can replace language that implies lack of choice with language that acknowledges choice.

We are dangerous when we are not conscious of our responsibility for how we behave, think, and feel.

Other Forms of Life-alienating Communication

We can never make people do anything.

Thinking based on “who deserves what” blocks compassionate communication.

Observing Without Evaluating

When we combine observation with evaluation, people are apt to hear criticism.

Distinguishing Observations From Evaluations

The first component of NVC entails the separation of observation from evaluation. When we combine observation with evaluation, others are apt to hear criticism and resist what we are saying.

Making Requests Consciously

The clearer we are about what we want, the more likely it is that we'll get it.

Asking for a Reflection

To make sure the message we sent is the message that's received, ask the listener to reflect it back.

Express appreciation when your listener tries to meet your request for a reflection.

Empathize with the listener who doesn't want to reflect back.

Requesting Honesty

After we express ourselves vulnerably, we often want to know (1) what the listener is feeling;

Making Requests of a Group

Conversations often drag on and on, fulfilling no one's needs, because it is unclear whether the initiator of the conversation has gotten what she or he wanted. In India, when people have received the response they want in conversations they have initiated, they say "bas" (pronounced "bus"). This means, "You need not say more. I feel satisfied and am now ready to move on to something else."

Requests versus Demands

When the other person hears a demand from us, they see two options: to submit or to rebel.

To tell if it's a demand or a request, observe what the speaker does if the request is not complied with.

It's a demand if the speaker then criticizes or judges.

It's a demand if the speaker then lays a guilt trip.

It's a request if the speaker then shows empathy toward the other person's needs.

Presence: Don't Just Do Something, Stand There

Empathy: emptying our mind and listening with our whole being

Instead of offering empathy, we tend instead to give advice or reassurance and to explain our own position or feeling. Empathy, on the other hand, requires us to focus full attention on the other person's message. We give to others the time and space they need to express themselves fully and to feel understood. There is a Buddhist saying that aptly describes this ability: "Don't just do something, stand there."

Intellectual understanding blocks empathy.

Listening for Feelings and Needs

Listen to what people are needing rather than what they are thinking.

Paraphrasing

When asking for information, first express our own feelings and needs.

Paraphrase only when it contributes to greater compassion and understanding.

Sustaining Empathy

We know a speaker has received adequate empathy when (1) we sense a release of tension, or (2) the flow of words comes to a halt.

Empathy That Heals

It's harder to empathize with those who appear to possess more power, status, or resources.

Empathy and the Ability to Be Vulnerable

We "say a lot" by listening for other people's feelings and needs.

Using Empathy to Defuse Danger

It may be difficult to empathize with those who are closest to us.

Empathy to Revive a Lifeless Conversation

To bring a conversation back to life: interrupt with empathy.

What bores the listener bores the speaker too.

Speakers prefer that listeners interrupt rather than pretend to listen.

Connecting Compassionately with Ourselves

NVC's most important use may be in developing self-compassion.

Evaluating Ourselves When We've Been Less Than Perfect

In our language there is a word with enormous power to create shame and guilt. This violent word, which we commonly use to evaluate ourselves, is so deeply ingrained in our consciousness that many of us would have trouble imagining how to live without it. It is the word should, as in "I should have known better" or "I shouldn't have done that." Most of the time when we use this word with ourselves, we resist learning, because should implies that there is no choice. Human beings, when hearing any kind of demand, tend to resist because it threatens our autonomy—our strong need for choice.

Avoid shoulding yourself!

Translating Self-judgments and Inner Demands

Self-judgments, like all judgments, are tragic expressions of unmet needs.

Self-forgiveness

NVC self-forgiveness: connecting with the need we were trying to meet when we took the action that we now regret.

Translating "Have to" to "Choose to"

With every choice you make, be conscious of what need it serves.

Distinguishing Stimulus From Cause

We are never angry because of what others say or do.

The cause of anger lies in our thinking—in thoughts of blame and judgment.

Thus, it is not the behavior of the other person but our own need that causes our feeling.

Stimulus versus Cause: Practical Implications

Violence comes from the belief that other people cause our pain and therefore deserve punishment.

We recall four options when hearing a difficult message: 1. Blame ourselves 2. Blame others 3. Sense our own feelings

and needs 4. Sense others' feelings and needs

Four Steps to Expressing Anger

Steps to expressing anger: 1. Stop. Breathe. 2. Identify our judgmental thoughts. 3. Connect with our needs. 4. Express our feelings and unmet needs.

Offering Empathy First

People do not hear our pain when they believe they are at fault.

On Needs, Strategies, and Analysis

When we don't know how to directly and clearly express what we need, but can only make analyses of others that sound like criticism to them, wars are never far away—whether verbal, psychological, or physical.

Informal Mediation: Sticking Our Nose in Other People's Business

Only after all needs have been mutually heard, do we progress to the solutions stage: making doable requests using positive, action language.

The Costs of Punishment

When we fear punishment, we focus on consequences, not on our own values. Fear of punishment diminishes self-esteem

and goodwill.

Two Questions That Reveal the Limitations of Punishment

Question 1: What do I want this person to do? Question 2: What do I want this person's reasons to be for doing it?

Resolving Internal Conflicts

The ability to hear our own feelings and needs and empathize with them can free us from depression.

Caring for Our Inner Environment

Focus on what we want to do rather than what went wrong.

The Intention behind the Appreciation

Express appreciation to celebrate, not to manipulate.

The Three Components of Appreciation

NVC clearly distinguishes three components in the expression of appreciation: the actions that have contributed to our well-being the particular needs of ours that have been fulfilled the pleasurable feelings engendered by the fulfillment of those needs

