

Nonviolent Communication

a language of life

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LESSONS 1-4

We wrote this lesson using guidelines in the book Nonviolent Communication by Marshall Rosenberg for Peace Ambassador training 2009.W

WEEK 1: Intro to NVC & Observations

PRAY IN

CHECK IN:

- NAME ONE THING YOU HAVE OBSERVED ABOUT A PERSON IN YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK
- PICK A QUOTE CARD

QUICK INTRO TO NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION AS A WHOLE
LIST FOUR PARTS:

1. To **observe** without evaluation, judgment, or analysis,
2. To express **feelings** which these observations evoke,
3. To express **needs** connected with these feelings,
4. To make a specific **request** of another person to help meet an unmet need, and to enrich life of everyone involved. Essential in this is that the other person is to be left free to honor or decline the request.

AT THE END OF THIS UNIT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO:

- COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY
- CREATE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT EVERYONE'S NEEDS BEING MET.
- IDENTIFY AND EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS AND NEEDS NONBLAMEFULLY
- NOT ONLY LISTEN TO, BUT UNDERSTAND OTHERS
- SPECIFICALLY REQUEST WHAT YOU WANT IN LIFE
- SIGNIFICANTLY DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF CONFLICT IN YOUR LIFE
- CHANGE THE WORLD.

Step 1: Observation Without Evaluation

Observations important to express how we are; mixing with evaluation increases likelihood that person will misunderstand and hear our words as criticism, which creates resistance.

Does not ask that we never evaluate, only that we evaluate based on observations specific to time and place.

ACTIVITY

CHOOSE WHICH IS WHICH:

Sarah: Doug Procrastinates

Ashley: Doug only studies for exams the night before.

Sarah: He comes over at least 3 times a week.

Ashley: He frequently comes over.

Ashley: You're too generous.

Sarah: When I see you give your lunch money to others I think you're being too generous.

Sarah: If you don't eat balanced meals your health will be impaired

Ashley: If you don't eat balanced meals, I fear that your health will be impaired.

Read Song:

I've never seen a lazy man;
I've seen a man who never ran
while I watched him, and I've seen
a man who sometimes slept between
lunch and dinner, and who'd stay
at home upon a rainy day,
but he was not a lazy man.
Before you call me crazy,
think, was he a lazy man or
did he just do things we label "lazy"?

I've never seen a stupid kid;
I've seen a kid who sometimes did
things I didn't understand
or things in ways I hadn't planned;
I've seen a kid who hadn't seen
the same places where I had been,
but he was not a stupid kid.
Before you call him stupid,
think, was he a stupid kid or did he
just know different things than you did?

I've looked as hard as I can look
but never ever seen a cook;
I saw a person who combined
ingredients on which we dined,
A person who turned on the heat
and watched the stove that cook the meat –
I saw those things but not a cook.
Tell me when you're looking,
is it a cook you see or is it someone
doing things that we call cooking?

What some of us call lazy
some call tired or easy-going,
what some of us call stupid
some just call a different knowing,
so I've come to the conclusion,
it will save us all confusion
if we don't mix up what we can see
with what is our opinion.
Because you may, I want to say also;
I know that's only my opinion.
(Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D: "Nonviolent Communication – Language of Life")

Study reasoning behind why observations and evaluations are different [ex. In book]
Do partner work with end exercises
Go back over the check in activity and have people reflect on and modify their
statements.

Non Violent Communication Part 2

I. Recap

A. Pray in & Check in

1. Check in: quick statement about how someone or something made you feel this week.

B. Week 1 lesson overview

1. Quick discussion on people's experiences.

II. How to fully express how you feel.

A. Unexpressed feelings

1. Example Hospital (vulnerability) pages: 39 and 40

2. Opinion v. Feelings

a.) Read group examples of opinions.

Martha

B. Language / Feelings v. Non-feelings

1. Video of Sarah <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MrA0OsXqz88>

2. List of feelings v non-feelings pg. 43-46

C. Avoiding Generalizations

1. read bottom of p.43
2. Words that we use in place of feelings.
3. Words that are feelings.

III. Conclusion

- A. Chapter end exercise
- B. hand out activity, discussion
- C. overview

Week 3: Taking responsibility for our feelings

Welcome/Check-in (pray in, review)

A. check in: What others do may be the stimulus of our feelings, but not the cause.

4 ways to receive a negative message activity.

read negative message 4 times and each time have a different person read the response given in the book; discuss how they responded and how it made them and the rest of the class feel regarding the situation.

Did the response solve anything?

Did it make you feel better short term? In the long run?

How did it make the other person feel?

Recognizing common speech patterns that mask feelings

Go over examples in book, along with giving easy fun ways of remembering each one. Discuss with class

Go over "the magic phrase": "I feel... .. because I"

Give examples of ways to modify speech patterns that mask feelings so that we can better express what we are feeling.

Identifying needs at the root of feelings

Overview of pulling the needs out of expressed feelings and the difference in expressing needs versus evaluating and judging others.

Activity: show a few statements such as "What you said was totally insensitive!" and have the group identify what needs may be underlying such as the need for more respect in dialogue.

PART 2

Expressing Needs & Not Expressing Needs

If you don't value your needs others might not either

- **This part suggests that occasionally we approach things like a court case. It explains how when we need something that we are not receiving, we sometimes begin to list all the reasons we "should have " or "deserve something". A list of reasons tends to make people resist rather than show compassion because they still don't understand. Listing can sound like an argument. If others don't respond sometimes we get discouraged and begin to think our needs don't matter. In actuality we just presented it in a way that is unlikely to get a positive response.**

- Mother example page 56.

Emotional Slavery and Liberation. (Common 3 Stages)

Stage 1: Emotional Slavery.

-This is when we feel that we are responsible for the way others feel.

- It describes the need to make others happy and do something when they are not.
- This need of ours can make people close to us seem like burdens. It puts strain on relationships. If you cannot fix other's problems it may cause you to want separation from them. You can lose yourself in their needs rather than your own.

B. Stage 2: The "Obnoxious stage" (blaming others)

- We become aware of the risk of trying to "fix" others at our expense.
- This stage is when we begin to say things like, "that's not my problem" and "I am not responsible for your feelings."
- This is also the time when we begin to feel guilt for having our own needs.
- Now that we have found that we have needs of our own, expressing them without knowing how can seem like we don't care at all for others needs/ wants.
- This is cause for a way to express our needs while respecting others needs

C. Stage 3: Emotional Liberation.

- We learn to respond to others needs out of compassion rather than fear, guilt, or shame.
- We take responsibility of our intentions. At the same time we don't jeopardize the needs of others.

ACTIVITY

Acknowledging needs.

- I will say a sentence and you tell me if it is acknowledging responsibility for his or her own feelings.

- On one side of the room have the have a sign that says "acknowledges feelings" and on the other side have a sign that says "does not acknowledge feelings".
- Read examples in at the end of chapter 5.

OVERALL SUMMARY

This section covers the needs behind our Feelings. What others say or do may be a stimulus not a cause for our feelings. This gives us insight into the needs behind others' negative messages.

We have to resist judging and criticizing others to cover up our own needs. When others hear these judgments they put their energy into counterattacks and self-defense.

Week 4 :Life Enriching Requests

- Pray in
- Check in:

What is something you would like to request of others in order to enrich your life?

Using Positive Action Language

- Negative requests often confuse people and tend to bring about resistance in the person you are requesting from.

-Example on page 67 - 68 of wife requesting time from her husband.

-Ask if group has any personal examples to share.

Language to Avoid

- Avoid being vague, abstract, and ambiguous in your words
- The cartoon example "power point cartoon" (attached)

- Talk about how this relates to our lives (take feedback from group).

Conscious Requests

-Implied request

- Things such as shouting "I am thirsty." if someone is in the kitchen it implies that you would like them to bring you a drink. However this does not always work.

- The book gives an example of a wife telling a husband that she is annoyed he did not pick up butter and onions from the store because she asked him to and she needs them to fix dinner. SHE thought she was implying that she wanted him to go back and retrieve them. HE only got that he should feel guilty for not getting them the first time.

- Ashley and Sarah give personal examples to open discussion.

- Sometimes we are not aware of what we are asking of others.

Scenario:

- A family lives in a small apartment and has no air conditioning. The mother works hard at her job but cannot quite afford the extra cost. The son comes into the living room where his family is and says how hot it is and flops down on the couch dramatically.

When he does not get any response he says again how hot it is and ends with an "UGH!"

-- What do you think the mother received from this?

-- How do you think the mother feels about not being able to help?

-- Do you think the boy knew what he was requesting or did he simply want people to understand his agony?

REQUESTING CLEARLY

- Ex. Page 74

Parents to boy - "Why don't you go get a haircut."

The boy might not know why and begin to feel self-conscious or unaccepted etc.

Instead it could have been expressed like the following.

"We are worried that your hair is getting so long that it might keep you from seeing things, especially when you ride your bike. How about a haircut?"

Asking for a Reflection

-Don't be afraid to ask if you are clear "What did I just say?" If you think that the other person might not have received your requests accurately you should ask what they heard you say.

- If you were misunderstood you can clear things up.

- It is good to express gratitude to listener for meeting you request for reflection.

-You might get reactions in defense such as "Do you think I am deaf?" It helps to explain why you are asking for a reflection.

Honest Requests

-After making a clear request we usually would like to know the other person's reaction to it. We sometimes may ask how they feel about it or if they would be willing to take a particular action.

Requests vs. Demands

- Requests are sometimes received as demands if people think they will be punished in some way if they do not comply.

-When confronted with a demand, people do one of two things - submit or rebel. You can determine which one it is by the speaker's reaction to the other's response.

- When requesting, try and avoid using words like should, suppose to, deserve, and it is only right.

- When requesting, it is good to follow up even a refusal for compliance with empathy for the other persons needs.

End Activity

- Separate room into 2 halves, one half is clear request, the other is unclear

- Place the 10 sentences at the end of the chapter into a hat/box and have people pick one

-The people read them to themselves and decide which side they believe they belong to and stand there

-Go through and have them justify their choices.

SUMMARY

-What we have learned