

# Frequently Asked Questions About

# Nonviolent Communication<sup>SM</sup>

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## Improve the quality of personal and professional relationships, one interaction at a time

From the bedroom to the boardroom, from the classroom to the war zone, Nonviolent Communication<sup>SM</sup> (NVC) is changing lives every day. NVC provides an easy to grasp, effective method to get to the root of violence, pain and conflict peacefully. By examining the unmet needs behind what we do or say, NVC helps reduce hostility, heal pain and strengthen professional and personal relationships.

NVC is now being taught in corporations, classrooms, prisons and mediation centers around the globe. And it is affecting cultural shifts as institutions, corporations and governments integrate NVC consciousness into their organizational structures and their approach to leadership.

International peacemaker, mediator, author and founder of the Center for Nonviolent Communication, Dr. Marshall Rosenberg spends more than **250** days each year teaching NVC, including some of the most impoverished, war-torn areas of the world. More than **180** certified trainers and hundreds more teach NVC in **35** countries to approximately **250,000** people each year.



NVC FAQ.pdf (05-15-05)

Find trainer certification information, trainings/conferences, register for our print newsletter and more at: [www.CNVC.org](http://www.CNVC.org)

Find press kits, purchase NVC books/booklets, register for our e-newsletter and more at:  
[www.NonviolentCommunication.com](http://www.NonviolentCommunication.com)



## What are the components of NVC?

While NVC is much more than a communication model, the components below provide a structural concept of the process that leads to giving and receiving from the heart.

**Honestly Expressing** how I am and what I would like without using blame, criticism or demands

**Empathically Receiving** how another is and what he/she would like without hearing blame, criticism or demands

Whether expressing or receiving, NVC focuses our attention on four pieces of information:

**Observations**—Objectively describing what is going on without using evaluation, moralistic judgment, interpretation or diagnosis

**Feelings**—Saying how you feel (emotions and body sensations) about what you have observed without assigning blame

**Needs**—The basic human needs that are or not being met and are the source of feelings

**Requests**—Clear request for actions that can meet needs

## Why do people find value in learning NVC?

Most of us are hungry for skills that can improve the quality of our relationships, to deepen our sense of personal empowerment or simply help us communicate more effectively. Unfortunately, most of us have been educated from birth to compete, judge, demand and diagnose; to think and communicate in terms of what is “right” and “wrong” with people. At best, the habitual ways we think and speak hinder communication and create misunderstanding and frustration. And still worse, they can cause anger and pain, and may lead to violence. Without wanting to, even people with the best of intentions generate needless conflict.

NVC helps us reach beneath the surface and discover what is alive and vital within us, and how all of our actions are based on human needs that we are seeking to meet. We learn to develop a vocabulary of feelings and needs that helps us more clearly express what is going on in us, and understand what is going on in others, at any given moment. When we understand and acknowledge our needs, we develop a shared foundation for much more satisfying relationships. Join the thousands of people worldwide who have improved their relationships and their lives with this simple yet revolutionary process.

“Marshall Rosenberg provides us with **the most effective tools to foster health and relationships.**

Nonviolent Communication connects soul to soul . . . It is the missing element in what we do.”

- **Deepak Chopra**, author,  
*How to Know God and Ageless Body, Timeless Mind*



## Life-Changing Benefits of NVC:

### Parenting and Families

- Reduce family conflicts and sibling rivalry
- Move beyond power struggles to cooperation and trust
- Create a quality of connection that embodies unconditional love
- Protect and nurture the autonomy of children
- Motivate using “power-with” rather than “power-over” strategies

### Personal Relationships

- Deepen your emotional connections
- Transform judgment and criticism into understanding and connection
- Listen so others are really heard
- Get what you want more often without using demands, guilt or shame
- Hear the needs behind whatever anyone does or says

### Education and Schools

- Maximize the individual potential of all students
- Strengthen students’ interest, retention and connection to their work
- Improve safety, trust and connection in your classroom
- Improve classroom teamwork, efficiency and cooperation
- Strengthen classroom and teacher-parent relationships

## “Schools in which students and teachers relate as partners

—where Rosenberg’s Nonviolent Communication is part of every interaction—are communities of learning, rather than top-down, impersonal factories. Young people begin to see school as a place of exploration, a safe and exciting place where each child is recognized and valued and the human spirit is nurtured and grows.”

- **Riane Eisler**, author, *The Chalice and the Blade*, *Tomorrow’s Children* and *The Power of Partnership*

### Personal Growth and Healing

- Transform shame and depression into personal empowerment
- Heal old pain
- Transform unhealthy habits
- Stay connected to your own needs and preferences
- Live your life by choice



## **The Life-Changing Benefits of NVC, continued:**

### **Organizational Effectiveness**

- Improve teamwork, efficiency and morale
- Increase meeting productivity
- Maximize the quality of your services or products
- Maximize your organization's benefit to the community

### **Anger Management**

- Transform anger before it leads to behavior you'll regret
- Discover the needs behind your anger
- Learn to appreciate what triggers you and others
- Identify solutions that are satisfying to everyone
- Express anger in ways that connect us to others

### **Business Relationships**

- Strengthen employee morale and loyalty
- Resolve workplace conflicts quickly and effectively
- Reduce office stress and absenteeism
- Maximize the potential of all employees
- Hear and address customer needs more effectively
- Offer employee evaluations that promote personal growth
- Improve the effectiveness of job and college interviews

### **Conflict Resolution**

- Resolve conflicts peacefully—personal or public, domestic or international
- Get to the heart of conflict and disputes quickly
- Improve cooperation—listen so others are really heard
- Transform criticism and blame into compassionate connection
- Prevent future pain and misunderstanding

**“Nonviolent Communication is one of the most useful processes you'll ever learn.”**

**- William Ury**, author, *Getting to Yes*

### **Spirituality**

- Connect your actions to your spiritual values
- Transform enemy images and moralistic judgments
- Connect to our common humanity
- Overcome cultural conditioning that promotes violence
- Care for your own needs first to fuel compassion for others



## How is NVC different from other self-help, communication or conflict resolution tools?

- **Unique Assumptions**—NVC begins by assuming that we are all compassionate by nature and that violent strategies—whether verbal or physical—are learned behaviors taught and supported by the prevailing culture. It also assumes that we all share the same, basic human needs, and that all actions are a strategy to meet one or more of these needs.
- **It's Simple**—NVC offers an effective four-step communication process that's easy to grasp.
- **More Than a Communication Model**—NVC goes beyond communication techniques by showing us how to stay connected to the life energy in ourselves and others. It also helps us to be conscious about the impact of how we think and how we use language in everyday conversation.
- **Broad Application**—NVC is a powerful tool with a variety of applications, from interpersonal relationships to international negotiation; personal healing to conflict resolution; social change to drug/alcohol treatment; trauma recovery to prison inmate rehabilitation.
- **Results Are Substantial**—NVC helps transform anger, destructive attitudes and habitual behaviors into more peaceful, life-serving actions. Around the globe, NVC has contributed to a significant reduction in violence in some of the most war-torn regions. NVC helps individuals, families and organizations reduce conflict, foster trust, deepen emotional connections, heal pain and strengthen personal empowerment.

“**Nonviolent Communication** is instrumental in creating an  
**extraordinary quality of life.**”

This compassionate and inspiring message cuts right to the heart of successful communication.”

- **Anthony Robbins**, author,  
*Awaken the Giant Within* and *Unlimited Power*

## How can NVC help me reduce conflict in my life?

- **Develop Your Emotional Vocabulary**—Improve your ability to clearly express your feelings and needs. Your expanded emotional vocabulary will help you avoid making moralistic judgments, blaming others for your feelings, and using other strategies that often contribute to conflicts. Teach your children these skills to empower them to resolve their conflicts peacefully.
- **Stay Connected to Your Feelings and Needs**—Prevent and reduce conflicts by learning to stay connected to your feelings and needs through self-empathy. Increase satisfying outcomes from emotionally charged situations by entering them from a place of calm and compassion, rather than defensiveness or anger.



## How can NVC help me reduce conflict in my life, continued

- **Break Negative, Habitual Patterns**—Overcome habitual patterns that often lead to conflict. Transform thinking patterns like moralistic judgments, blame, criticism, shoulds and “have-tos” that can lead to anger, depression, guilt or shame.
- **Hear the Needs Behind All Behavior**—NVC teaches us that all behavior—even behavior we dislike—is a strategy to meet one of the many needs we all have in common. Diminish anger, violence and conflict by connecting to the needs behind whatever anyone does or says.
- **Get to the Heart of Conflict Quickly**—Defuse heated situations before they lead to behavior you’ll regret. Use empathy to let others know they are really heard—which is often all that is needed to transform conflict into powerful connection.

“ Marshall Rosenberg’s dynamic communication techniques transform potential conflicts into **peaceful dialogues.** You’ll learn simple tools to defuse arguments and **create compassionate connections** with your family, friends and others.”

- **John Gray, Ph.D.**, author,  
*Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*

## How can NVC improve the quality of my personal and professional relationships?

### Personal and Family Relationships

- **Make Clear, “Doable” Requests**—Get what you want more often by learning how to make requests that are actually “doable”, easy to understand and can be done willingly. Learn alternatives to coercive behaviors like demands, threats of punishment or promises of reward that often motivate people to fulfill our requests from a sense of fear, guilt or shame.
- **Find Greater Intimacy**—Strengthen your connection to your partner, siblings, family and friends by more clearly understanding their values, hopes and needs.
- **Listen More Effectively**—Learn how to listen so your partner, colleague or family member is confident he/she has been heard. Learn how to translate another’s negative language into feelings and needs in order to transform emotionally charged situations into powerful connections.
- **Stay Connected to Your Values**—Deepen your personal connections by entering all interactions from a place of compassion.



## **How can NVC help me improve the quality of my personal and professional relationships, continued**

### **Professional and Business Relationships**

- **Lead More Effectively**—NVC helps leaders let go of “power-over” leadership styles, such as the coercive use of threats of punishment or promises of reward, which can lead to resistance and often stifle individual creativity and potential. Leaders learn a “power-with” approach that respects and values everyone’s needs. The NVC approach to leadership enhances personal power, strengthens teamwork and maximizes individual potential.
- **Provide More Meaningful Employee Evaluations**—Provide staff with more empowering, meaningful evaluations that move beyond moralistic judgments of good/bad or right/wrong. Instead, identify specific behaviors that are or are not meeting needs, that present clear requests and create specific agreements for future actions.
- **Get to the Heart of Workplace Conflict Quickly**—Mediate conflict more quickly by ensuring each person or party is really heard. Facilitate the communication of specific observations, the expression of feelings and the unmet needs that have triggered the conflict. Then create specific remedies that satisfy everyone’s needs, without compromise.
- **Improve Employee Morale**—Improve employee morale by learning how to effectively acknowledge and value the needs of the entire workforce. Help ensure staff or colleagues are heard—often for the first time.

## **What positive cultural shifts is NVC creating in the world?**

- **An Internal Culture of Peace**—Peace in the world begins with creating an internal culture of peace. NVC helps us live peacefully in deed and word by entering any interaction from a compassionate consciousness. It also provides us effective tools to heal pain, find mutually satisfying resolution to conflict and to get our needs met peacefully.
- **A New Generation of Corporate and Community Leaders**—NVC is creating a new generation of leaders who know how to empower individuals, groups and communities without using coercion, fear of punishment or demands. Employers and communities are already witnessing substantial benefits in the effectiveness of their workforce and the rate at which we progress professionally and technologically.
- **A New Generation of Communicators**—NVC is helping establish a new generation who have better skills to express their feelings and needs, to act from a place of compassion and to establish emotional connections that put meeting needs first.
- **Schools That Support Students’ Emotional Safety**—NVC is helping create a new movement in education rooted in the importance of teaching emotional intelligence and establishing emotional safety in the classroom. Schools and classrooms that integrate NVC are already noticing improvements in test scores, a reduction in conflicts and violence, improved workforce preparedness and an increase in civic engagement.



## **What positive cultural shifts is NVC creating in the world, continued**

- **An Empowered Peace Activism**—Marshall Rosenberg’s message helps us work for social transformation from a place of understanding and compassion, rather than a place of fear, anger or moralistic judgment. We learn to hear the needs behind all behaviors, to ground our responses in compassion and act from a desire to meet our common needs.
- **A Reduction in Violence by Addressing its Cause: Unmet Needs**—NVC helps us move beyond the symptoms of violence to address its root cause—unmet needs. From substance abuse to domestic violence; from emotional abuse to anger management programs; and from social work to international peacekeeping efforts—NVC gives us the tools for more powerful, effective and substantive change.

“Changing the way the world works sounds daunting, but

**Nonviolent Communication helps liberate us from ancient patterns of violence.”**

- **Francis Lefkowitz**, *Body and Soul*

## **What role does the Center for Nonviolent Communication (CNVC) play in spreading peace on our planet?**

The Center for Nonviolent Communication (CNVC) is an international nonprofit peacemaking organization devoted to supporting the spread of Nonviolent Communication around the world. Find local, national and international training opportunities, trainer certification info, and a variety of other NVC educational materials at: [www.CNVC.org](http://www.CNVC.org)

### **Resources the Center provides:**

- Coordination of Marshall Rosenberg’s global training activities
- Development of regional and theme-based NVC projects
- NVC-related research initiatives
- NVC trainer certification process comparable to an independent study master’s degree program
- More than **180** certified trainers who provide workshops and seminars in **35** countries on **six** continents
- Annual print newsletter, website, and topic-based email list serves that connect the movement, celebrate progress and continue to spread NVC
- Quarterly **NVC Quick Connect e-Newsletter** published in conjunction with PuddleDancer Press





## What major steps is CNVC taking to decrease violence worldwide?

- **Training**—Marshall Rosenberg teaches **250** days each year around the globe, including **10** nine-day International Intensive Trainings (IITs). The rigorous NVC certification process helps protect the integrity of NVC teaching. More than **180** CNVC certified trainers and hundreds more teach NVC in **35** countries to an estimated **250,000** people each year.
- **Educational Materials**—The online NVC bookstore ([www.NonviolentCommunication.com](http://www.NonviolentCommunication.com)) and CNVC bookstore ([www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)) sell books, videos, audiotapes and other learning materials.
- **Formal NVC Projects**—Seven regional and theme-based projects have been developed to provide focus and leadership for teaching NVC in a particular application (such as social change and parenting) and in high-need geographic locations.
- **Research Initiatives**—CNVC has developed an NVC research committee to develop scientifically based, peer-reviewed research studies to identify the measurable impact of NVC training.

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## What makes Marshall Rosenberg a unique, timely and impactful leader to report on?



International peacemaker, mediator, healer and founder of CNVC, Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D. spends more than **250** days each year teaching NVC in local communities, at national conferences and in some of the most impoverished, war-torn areas of the world. Rosenberg's unassuming manner and the grassroots nature of the Nonviolent Communication movement have often kept him from the limelight of major media news. Yet these factors are indeed what make him such a unique global figure. Rosenberg has created an exceptional process that is simple, yet has had a profound effect on reducing violence around the world. His teaching style is both intimate and powerful. With guitar and puppets in hand, a history of traveling to some of the most violent corners of the world and a spiritual energy that fills a room, Rosenberg shows us how to create a much more peaceful and satisfying world.

For more information about Dr. Rosenberg, including his biography, curriculum vitae, downloadable photos, and articles written about Rosenberg in the media, visit: [www.NonviolentCommunication.com](http://www.NonviolentCommunication.com), click on [Meet Marshall Rosenberg](#)



## About PuddleDancer Press

PuddleDancer Press (PDP) is the premier publisher of Nonviolent Communication<sup>SM</sup> related works. Its mission is to provide high quality materials that help people create a world in which all needs are met compassionately. PDP is the unofficial marketing arm of the international Center for Nonviolent Communication (CNVC). Publishing revenues are used to develop and implement NVC promotion, educational materials and media campaigns. By working in partnership with CNVC, NVC trainers, teams and local supporters, PDP has created a comprehensive, cost-effective promotion effort that has helped bring NVC to thousands more people each year.

Since 2003, PDP has donated over **50,000** NVC books to organizations, decision-makers and individuals in need around the world. This program is supported in part by donations to CNVC, and by partnerships with like-minded organizations around the world. To ensure the continuation of this program, please make a tax-deductible donation to CNVC, earmarked to the Book Giveaway Campaign at [www.CNVC.org/donation](http://www.CNVC.org/donation)

### Visit the PDP website at [www.NonviolentCommunication.com](http://www.NonviolentCommunication.com) to find the following resources:

- **Shop NVC**—Continue your learning—purchase our NVC titles online safely and conveniently. Find multiple-copy and package discounts, learn more about our authors and read dozens of book endorsements from renowned leaders, educators, relationship experts and more.
- **e-Newsletter**—To stay apprised of new titles and the impact NVC is having around the globe, visit our website and register for the quarterly NVC Quick Connect e-Newsletter. Archived newsletters are also available.
- **Help Share NVC**—Access hundreds of valuable tools, resources and adaptable documents to help you share NVC, form a local NVC community, coordinate NVC workshops and trainings, and promote the life-enriching benefits of NVC training to organizations and communities in your area. Sign up for our NVC Promotion e-Bulletin to get all the latest tips and tools.
- **For the Press**—Journalists and producers can access author bios and photos, recently published articles in the media, video clips and other valuable information.
- **NVC Community Forum**—Scheduled for launch in 2005, the NVC Community Forum provides an online space to support the continued growth and spread of NVC worldwide. Join our forum today at [www.ShareNVC.com](http://www.ShareNVC.com)

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