

Non-Violent Communication (NVC) Model

Prepare:

- Express honestly through the four components and receive empathically without criticism or blame
- Make a time to talk and in the appropriate place
- State your intention (frame the request as a shared value or goal)

Then Clearly State:

- 1) What I **observe** / experience – (Observe the behavior without evaluating or judging.)
“When I see/hear...” “The last few times I initiated an activity, you said you didn’t want to do it.” “XX didn’t ask for my opinion during the meeting.” “XX spent over 50 hours at work this week.” Hint: separate observation from evaluation
- 2) How I **feel** in relation to what I observe (Identify a feeling. Feelings are always related to your body, and never involve others. Emotion or sensation rather than thought.)
“I feel...” (i.e., “I feel reluctant...” “I feel disappointed in myself...” or “I feel grateful...” “I feel hopeful...” “I find it difficult that”

“I experience feeling x in myself.” “When x happens, I feel x” “I feel disappointed because you said you would do it and you didn’t.”

- 3) What I **need**, value, desire that causes my feelings – (Identify your need or desire. How it affects me / the work environment/the shared project / others)

“...because I need/value...” my ability to be effective, know what to expect, accomplish tasks...

“When you received that award, I felt happy because I was hoping you’d be recognized for the work you put into the project.” “When you raise your voice, I feel anxious because I’m telling myself someone will get hurt here and I need to know that we’re all safe.” “I am grateful that you offered to take the extra shift because I need to rest.” “When you said you’d do it and then didn’t, I felt disappointed because I want to be able to rely upon your words.” “I would like you to tell me how you feel about what I just said.”

- 4) Formulating a **request**. Phrase a specific request positively, speaking kindly, but firmly and clearly, without unnecessary emotion such as sarcasm.

“What I prefer...” “Would you be willing to X...?” “My request to you is...” (Specific request / proposal or question)

“I want you to tell me what you heard me say.” “Would you be willing to take a course in assertiveness training, which I believe would increase your self-confidence?” “What I prefer is for you to tell me how you feel about what I did and what you’d like me to do differently.” “I’d like you to be on time when we have our weekly meetings.” “Would you be willing to tell me how you feel about going to the Opera?”

- Obtain **feedback** on everything you have done so far. “Am I on the right track with this conversation?” or “Time out. How are we doing resolving this issue?”
- Benefits to all (optional) – Having clarified both parties’ needs in the situation, propose strategies for resolving the conflict.

Exercise: Think of a situation in which your needs are not being met. Write a dialogue that begins with the NVC form:

“When I see that _____ I feel _____ because my need for _____ is not being met. Would you be willing to tell me what you heard me say?”

More examples:

“Felix, when I (1) see socks under the coffee table I (2) feel irritated because I am needing (3) more order in the room that we share in common. (4) Would you be willing to put your socks in your room or in the washing machine? [If the response lacks clarity or seems disconnected, then request feedback.] (5) So, I know that you understood me, would you tell me what you heard me say?”

“I see you look away when I talk to you. I also hear you speak softly and therefore I cannot understand you properly. Could you please speak louder for me so that I can understand you and we can work together more smoothly?”

“When I hear you addressing me like that, I feel agitated because I need cooperation and a peaceful resolution of our differences. Are you willing to tell me what you are feeling and needing right now instead of what you think I am?”

*Adapted from Marshall Rosenberg’s, Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life
UCOP Office of the Ombuds*