

Mindful Communication Foundations

Course Syllabus

Class 1. Mindful Communication and Innate Presence

Orientation; overview of Mindful Communication and Nonviolent Communication; the innate capacity for presence; modulating nervous system response to conflict; the practice of pausing; developing resilience.

Class 2. How to Stop Arguing: Human Needs the Intention to Understand

Habitual views and responses to conflict; training in the foundation of intention; the transformative view of needs; awareness of needs and values as the key to compassion and transforming communication; listening for needs.

Class 3. Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Empathy and Emotion

The role of feelings in communication and their relationship to needs; differentiating somatic and cognitive components of emotion; empathic and non-empathic communication; forms and practices for empathy.

Class 4. How to Raise an Issue without Starting a Fight: Observations

Using neutral language to raise an issue; distinguishing observations from evaluation and interpretation; translating judgments; practicing clear and honest self-expression.

Class 5. If You Want Something, Ask for It: Requests

Using requests to assess, maintain, and re-establish connection; deepening embodied consciousness of values/needs; fully expressing gratitude and connection; integrated live practice.

Class 6. Being Light on Your Feet: The Dance of Dialogue

Core aspects of dialogue; tracking process and content of a conversation; interrupting and redirecting a dialogue; integrated live practice; review, questions, course closing.

COURSE LOCATIONS

Mondays Nights
Jan 15 – Feb 19, 6–9pm
Sacred Streams
2149 Byron St.
Berkeley, CA. 94702

Thursdays Nights
Jan 18 – Feb 22, 6–9pm
601 Van Ness Ave.
Community Room, Level Mezzanine
San Francisco, CA 94102

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Course Learning Objectives

Class 1. Mindful Communication & Innate Presence

- 1) To describe the three foundations of Mindful Communication and the four components of training attention.
- 2) To list at least three ways of bringing presence to conversation.
- 3) To demonstrate the clinical skill of pausing.
- 4) To describe at least two ways of modulating one's nervous system activation during conflict

Class 2. How to Stop Arguing: Human Needs and the Intention to Understand

- 1) To describe how one's view of difference effects one's intentions when in conflict.
- 2) To list four habitual ways of responding to conflict
- 3) To explain the differences between "needs" and "strategies," and how awareness of human needs supports compassion.
- 4) To demonstrate the skill of "listening for what matters."

Class 3. Getting to the Heart of the Matter: Empathy and Emotion

- 1) To explain how feelings can help or hinder communication
- 2) To accurately assess true emotions from words implying judgment or projecting blame
- 3) To describe the difference between empathy and non-empathic forms of communication.
- 4) To demonstrate the ability to offer empathy by linking feelings with underlying needs

Class 4. How to Raise an Issue without Starting a Fight: Observations

- 1) To explain the difference between observations and evaluations or interpretations.
- 2) To demonstrate the ability to construct observations of behavior and action.
- 3) To translate a judgment into an observation, feeling and need.

Class 5. If You Want Something, Ask for It: Requests

- 1) To describe the difference between requests and demands.
- 2) To explain the difference between "connection requests" and "solution requests"
- 3) To formulate reflection and response requests.

Class 6. Being Light on Your Feet: The Dance of Dialogue

- 1) To explain the concept of "tracking" and its two main areas in conversation
- 2) To define the "locus of attention"
- 3) To demonstrate the skill of "interrupting skillfully"
- 4) To explain the difference between "flooding" and "chunking" in dialogue