



Speak Your Truth with Love and Listen Deeply

A Training in
Mindfulness-Based
Nonviolent
Communication

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BONUS CONTENT

The Foundations of Mindful Communication

I. Effective communication requires PRESENCE

To have clarity and connection in our dialogues and relationships, we actually need to be *here*. If we're not present, we won't have much access to tools we've learned or our good intentions.

Practice: Lead with presence

Start from and return to embodied presence in all interactions. Put down other thoughts and projects and give your full attention to whomever you are speaking with. Keep some awareness in your body. Trust presence as a source of stability, empathy, mutuality and information.

- a. Feel your body, its weight or heaviness.
- b. Feel your hands or your feet.
- c. Notice the choice to speak or listen.
- d. Pause or slow down.

II. INTENTION determines direction

Intention is about where we're coming from, why we speak and listen. It is the motivation for our communication, the vector that drives it. Many interactions are directed by our impulses to get what we want, make a point, be heard or seen in a certain way. Yet the foundation for productive dialogue and skillful negotiation is the quality of connection and understanding we create.

Practice: Come from curiosity and care

Intention – *and specifically the intention to understand* – is perhaps the single most powerful and transformative ingredient in relationship and communication. Let go a little of the outcome; see what happens when you take a sincere interest in understanding another's experience. Cultivate and return to the simple yet powerful intention to understand.

III. ATTENTION shapes experience

Where we place our attention shapes what we experience. Focusing on another's faults, we fail to see them as a whole person. We tend to focus primarily on the story, the content of a situation, or on our judgments. Learning how to skillfully attend to the essential aspects of a message can transform a dialogue. The first component of this training is identifying what matters, what is at stake.

Practice: Focus on what matters

Listen for what matters in yourself and others. Ask inwardly, "What matters most about this?" This kind of inquiry helps us get beyond surface positions to the underlying values and needs in a situation, creating more room for understanding, collaboration, and creative problem solving.

- a. **Observations:** What happened? (without interpretation)
- b. **Feelings:** How do you feel about it? (on inside, without blame)
- c. **Needs:** Why? What matters? (the deeper values or shared goals/objectives)
- d. **Requests:** What would you like to see happen next? How can you move forward?
 - i. For connection: asking for empathy, for a reflection, or for information
 - ii. For solutions: practical agreements that might meet all of the needs present

Integrating these principles takes time, dedication, and persistence. Used consistently and patiently, they can create profound changes in one's life, relationships, and inner experience.

Universal Human Needs List

(without reference to specific people, time, actions, locations, or things)

<u>Subsistence</u>	Laughter	To be trusted	Self-worth
<i>Physical sustenance</i>	Play		
Air, Food, Water	Pleasure	<i>Community</i>	<i>Understanding</i>
Shelter	Rejuvenation	Belonging	Awareness
Health, Medicine		Celebration	Clarity
Physical Safety	<u>Connection</u>	Cooperation	Discovery
Rest / Sleep	<i>Affection</i>	Equality	Learning
Movement	Appreciation	Inclusion	Making sense of life
	Attention	Mutuality	
	Closeness	Participation	
<i>Security</i>	Companionship	Self-expression	<i>Meaning</i>
Consistency	Harmony	Sharing	Aliveness
Stability	Intimacy		Challenge
Order/Structure	Love	<u>Meaning</u>	Contribution
Safety (emotional)	Sexual Expression	<i>Sense of Self</i>	Creativity
Trust	Support	Authenticity	Effectiveness
	Tenderness	Competence	Exploration
<u>Freedom</u>	Warmth	Confidence	Integration
<i>Autonomy</i>	Touch	Creativity	Purpose
Choice		Dignity	
Ease	<i>To Matter</i>	Growth	<i>Transcendence</i>
Independence	Acceptance	Healing	Beauty
Power	Care	Honesty	Communion
Space	Compassion	Integrity	Faith
Spontaneity	Consideration	Marking	Hope
	Empathy	Transitions	Inspiration
<i>Leisure / Relaxation</i>	Kindness	Mastery	Mourning
Adventure	Mutual Recognition	Self-acceptance	Peace (inner)
Fun	Respect	Self-care	Presence
Humor	To be seen	Self-connection	
Joy	To be heard	Self-knowledge	
	To be understood	Self-realization	

Additional Needs for the Workplace *(Some may lean more towards strategies)*

<i>Resources</i>	<i>Communication</i>	<i>Accountability</i>	<i>Empowerment</i>
Education, Training	Data, Research	Feedback	Freedom
Equipment, Tools	Clear Roles	Humility	Reassurance
Information	Clear Decision-making	Integrity	Validation
Supplies	Collaboration	Morality, Ethics	Accept limitations
Time		Quality	Acknowledge loss
		Accept learnings	Honor endings

Human Emotions

(Emotional sensations, without reference to thoughts or interpretations)

When Our Needs are Met:

PEACEFUL

tranquil
calm
content
absorbed
serene
loving
fulfilled
satisfied
relaxed
relieved
quiet
carefree

LOVING

warm
affectionate
tender
appreciative
friendly
sensitive
compassionate
grateful
trusting
open
thankful
passionate

GLAD

happy
excited
hopeful
joyful
satisfied
delighted
grateful
confident
inspired
touched
proud
exhilarated

PLAYFUL

energetic
invigorated
refreshed
impish
alive
lively
exuberant
giddy
adventurous
mischievous
goofy
buoyant

INTERESTED

inquisitive
enriched
alert
aroused
astonished
concerned
curious
eager
enthusiastic
fascinated
intrigued
surprised

When Our Needs are Not Met:

MAD

impatient
irritated
frustrated
grouchy
agitated
exasperated
disgusted
animosity
bitter
rancorous
irate, furious
angry
hostile
enraged

SAD

lonely
hurt, hurting
unhappy
gloomy
overwhelmed
distant
discouraged
distressed
dismayed
disheartened
despairing
sorrowful
depressed
blue
miserable

SCARED

afraid
nervous
startled
anxious
worried
frightened
insecure
anguished
sensitive
shocked
apprehensive
jealous
terrified
horrificed
desperate

TIRED

exhausted
fatigued
lethargic
indifferent
weary
overwhelmed
fidgety
sleepy
disinterested
reluctant
bored
dull
blah
mopey
heavy

CONFUSED

perplexed
hesitant
troubled
uncomfortable
withdrawn
apathetic
detached
embarrassed
helpless
uneasy
suspicious
puzzled
unsteady
restless
skeptical

For additional feelings lists, see www.baynvc.org and www.cnvc.org

For Paul Eckman's work on the Atlas of Emotions, see www.atlasofemotions.org

Empathy Map

This activity can be used to explore both sides of a disagreement. Think of a conflict. Sit quietly, feeling your intentions for how you wish to relate to others. Feel those intentions in your body.

1. Explore your feelings, then enter those in the upper-left quadrant of the table below.
2. To what needs are each of those feelings connected? What matters to you about this situation? Enter those needs in the lower-left. Continue this contemplation until you feel some settling or clarity about your needs.
3. Shift your attention to the other person. Explore their feelings. Enter those in the upper-right.
4. What do you imagine might be going on for them? What might they need? Try to get beyond the surface to deeper, universal human values. Stretch your heart; imagine how things look through their eyes. They too long to be happy; their choices are strategies to meet fundamental needs. Inquire about their needs/values until you arrive at words that you can connect with and support. Enter those needs into the lower-right quadrant.
5. Compare the two sides. Does anything shift for you? How might you approach a conversation differently having explored this?

<i>Your Feelings</i>	<i>Their Feelings</i>
<i>Your Needs</i>	<i>Their Needs</i>

Speaking with Clarity and Care

The less blame and judgment in our words, the easier it is for others to hear us and collaborate. Think of a situation in which someone has done or said something you don't enjoy.

1. Observation: What happened specifically? Write down one concrete observation, without any interpretation. Would this person get defensive hearing this? If so, try to make it more neutral.

2. Emotions: What impact has this had on you? How do you feel about what happened? Name your emotions *on the inside*, distinct from any story or judgment. "I feel hurt" rather than "I feel attacked."

3. Your Needs: What matters to you in this situation? What needs do you have? Name your needs in the positive: what you *do* want rather than what you *don't* want.

4. Their Needs: The more we understand someone else, the easier it is to work together. What do think they might be wanting or needing that led them to do this? Stretch to imagine their needs.

5. Request – Connection: What could you ask that would help create more understanding or connection in the moment? Do you want them to hear you and offer some kind of reflection? Would you like more information about where they were coming from?

6. Request – Solution: Do you have any ideas for what this person could say or do that would meet your needs? How could ask in a way that indicates your willingness to collaborate?

7. Speaking: After considering all of this, how might you begin a dialogue with this person? What could you say that might indicate your interest in finding something that works for both of you?

Useful Communication Phrases

Requests for Dialogue: *To open the space for collaboration*

- “Would you be willing to take some time to have a conversation with me about ...[topic]?”
- “Could we sit down together and look at what we both need to see if we can find a way to work this out? (or: to see if we can find a solution that works for both of us?)”

Empathy “Openers”: *To begin offering someone an empathic guess / reflection*

- “Let me see if I’m hearing you right. What I’m getting is ...?”
- “Let me see if I’m understanding. Is what you’re saying that...?”
- “I want to make sure I’m still with you. It sounds like ...?”

Eliciting more information / connecting:

- “Tell me more...”
- “Is there anything else you’d like me to hear or understand about this?”
- “Could you tell me one or two things I might say or do right now that would help you to feel more understood / more heard?”

Requests for Empathy: *Inviting a reflection or empathic guess from another*

- “What would be most helpful for me right now is just to be heard. I wonder if you would be willing to listen for a bit and just tell me what you’re hearing matters to me?”
- “I’m wondering if you could take a moment to tell me what you’ve heard. It would really mean a lot and help me to know if I’ve gotten my feelings across.”
- “I just said a lot and I’m not sure it all came out the way I was intending. Could you tell me what you just got from all that?”
- “What I just said is really important to me. Would you be willing to tell me what you’re getting? It would really help me to feel heard.”
- “Could you tell me what you hear matters to me in this situation?”

Interrupting: *To insert a pause in the conversation if you need time to track what the other person is saying, or feel overwhelmed with the amount they’re saying.*

- “You’ve just shared a lot and I want to make sure I’m getting it all. Can we pause for a moment so I can make sure I’m following it all?” [Follow with a reflection]
- “Wow – this sounds really important. I think I’d like a moment to just take that in.”

Taking a Break: *To pause a conversation (when triggered), or to take a long break to regroup.*

- “I’m interested in working this out (OR, talking more about this), but I don’t have the sense that anything I say at this point is going to be useful. So could we take a break until ...”
- “I’d really like to hear what you have to say, but the way you’re saying it is making that very difficult. I wonder if you’d be willing to ...
 - ... try explaining what’s happening for you in a different way?”
 - ... take a break until we’ve both had a chance to reflect on this?
 - ... let me a moment to tell you what’s going on for me?”

Requests for “Do-overs”: *To acknowledge a mistake and try again.*

- “That didn’t really come out right. Can I try that again?”
- “I feel like we got off to the wrong start here. Can we start over?”