



Giving & Receiving Gratitude

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Gratitude or appreciation is recognizing when a person has contributed to our life or to the lives of others.

Expressing Gratitude

In NVC, we express gratitude in 3 parts:

1. What specifically did the other person do that enriched your life?
2. How do you feel now as you recall what they did?
3. What need of yours was met by what they did?

Note that these three parts are simply the first three parts of any NVC expression: observation, feeling, need

Example:

"When I remember you asking if I could use some help this morning, I feel grateful because I value mutual support among our team."

Receiving Appreciation

In NVC, I receive appreciation joyfully, even with awe, as I hold in my awareness this power that flows through me to enrich life for others. It is often hard to receive appreciation fully because it is hard to recognize this beauty & power within us.

This is a very different experience than the way we often respond to compliments, through false humility or a feeling of superiority.

False humility: denies the importance of the appreciation; e.g. "It was nothing."

Feeling of superiority: Thinking "I am better than others because I received the appreciation or compliment."

* parts of this document are adapted from the book "Nonviolent Communication," by Marshall Rosenberg, 2nd Edition, 2005, Puddledancer Press

Appreciation vs. Compliments

Appreciation: what's alive in ourselves (feelings & needs met) stimulated by the other person's actions

Compliment: a positive judgment of the other person

e.g. "You're really great!" "Good job!"
"You are a kind person."

Compliments, though positive, are still judgments of other people. They are often used to manipulate the behavior of others.

"...the more you become a connoisseur of gratitude, the less you are a victim of resentment, depression, and despair. Gratitude will act as an elixir that will gradually dissolve the hard shell of your ego—your need to possess and control—and transform you into a generous being. The sense of gratitude produces true spiritual alchemy, makes us magnanimous—large souled."

—Sam Keen

Hunger for Appreciation

We tend to notice & express what's wrong rather than what's right. We are all hungry for our intentions to enrich the lives of others to be recognized.

Exercise: "What appreciation might someone give you that would leave you jumping for joy?"