



# On Learning NVC ...

## It's About *Awareness* not *Content*

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In my experience, learning NVC involves a different kind of "understanding" or "learning" ... very little learning from the head or making sense of concepts ... more learning from the heart, learning with my whole being, expanding my awareness ... it's not a linear progression, but *spiraling* more deeply & more *expansively*.

I have observed that this kind of learning does not happen very meaningfully by *talking about* NVC. It happens most powerfully when we seek to connect with one another and with ourselves ... when we engage in and witness the experience of NVC. The learning happens in the struggle and the longing to connect. I am often more empowered to engage in NVC when I remember that it is not about getting it right, but about *moving toward* the connection that I want (what Marshall calls "growing progressively less stupid").

Amidst these experiences, each one of us is learning what we are ready for. In the same exercise or experience, we may each be learning something very different. I find that I am nearly always surprised. If I am willing to share my experiences, I often notice that my own learning seems to deepen as it is received by the other person or people that I am with.

### **Creating the internal space that nurtures learning & connection**

I have found that my learning of NVC happens more fully when I create a place in myself that supports that learning:

- a place of **spaciousness** ... we're discovering what's already there, not putting more stuff in
- a place of **awareness of self** in this moment ... noticing my thoughts ... my body sensations ... my feelings ... my intentions ... my needs ... my choices
- a place of **openness** ... finding where I am tense or distracted, and "letting go" to a place of being alert, yet relaxed ... not doing, but being
- a place of **choice** ... where there is no "have to", no "should", no "supposed to" ... there are only choices

### **Some strategies that may enhance your learning during this workshop:**

- Remember often the intentions with which you came ... take responsibility for their fulfillment.
- Pause often to notice what is going on within you ... connect to your own feelings & needs
- Express your needs and ask for what would fulfill them.
- Remember the common intentions of the group.
- Before speaking in the group, be clear what your own needs are and what specific request you have of the group to meet your needs.
- When another person is speaking, focus on their feelings & needs.
- When another person is speaking, pause or check in to see if they are complete before expressing what is

- a place of **self-compassion** ... where there are no judgments, no right or wrong, no punishments or rewards ... remembering that I am trying to get my needs met in the best way I know how
- a place where I remember **what I am responsible for** and **what I am not responsible for** ...
  - ... what are your intentions for being here? ...
  - ... only you are responsible for your intentions, your feelings, your needs, your choices ...
  - ... only I am responsible for my intentions, my feelings, my needs, my choices ...

## **Creating the community space that nurtures learning & connection**

We are each co-creating and contributing to the quality of the community space that holds us, whether we are conscious of it or not. What my intention is, where I focus my attention, and the choices I make ... each of these becomes a part of the texture of the space. In my experience, certain qualities in that space support connection and learning among us:

- a space of **remembering our common intention** for coming together ... to connect with one another ... to learn and grow in our understanding of that connection and in the process of NVC that takes us toward it
- a space of **inclusiveness** ... where each person is invited and given the space to be heard ... where your needs matter as much as my own
- a space of **authenticity** ... where I vulnerably express my own feelings & needs as best I can
- a space of **empathy** ... where I strive to hear feelings and needs no matter what is being said ... where I give each person plenty of space until that person has been fully heard
- a space of **conscious choice** ... where I strive to hold our common intention, the needs of each person, and my own needs as I choose how to best meet these needs ... where I honor the choices of those around me
- a space of **compassion** ... where there are no judgments, no right or wrong, no demands, no punishments or rewards ... only people trying to get their needs met in the best way they know how

stirred up in you.

- Remember: we are all doing the best that we can

## **Some strategies that may enhance your learning after this workshop:**

- Get empathy. Empathy is the fuel we need to connect.
- Find an empathy buddy & meet at least weekly.
- Participate in an NVC practice group.
- Meet with an experienced mentor who can nurture your growth
- Participate in a 7-day or 9-day NVC immersion training
- Strive to live NVC throughout your life: at home, in your workplace, in the organizations in which you participate
- Pause often to notice what is going on within you ... connect to your own feelings & needs
- Meditate on needs
- Love your jackal ... he has many gifts for you