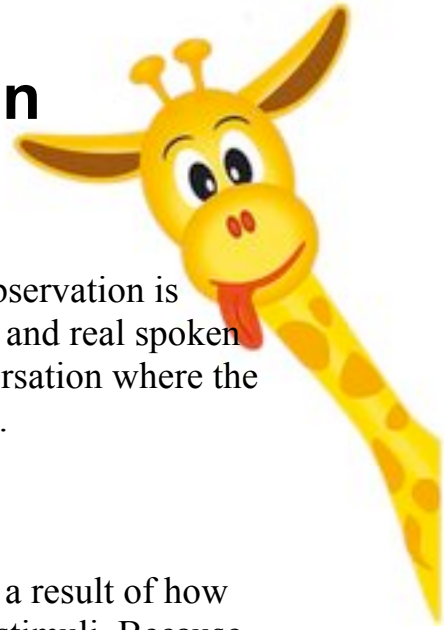


## The Four Steps of Nonviolent Communication



### ■ Observations

are factual and intrinsically non-evaluative. A well articulated observation is a faithful and accurate description of actions, behaviours, events and real spoken words. The NVC observation is often the entry point for a conversation where the intention is to address an issue and reach a shared understanding.

### ■ Feelings

arise within the limbic system and autonomic nervous system as a result of how we react to, interpret, and frame any given internal and external stimuli. Because feelings include emotional responses to our thoughts and prejudices vis-à-vis ourselves, others and the world (many of which are unexamined), they may not always be the most reliable means of assessing what a situation calls for. It is important to make the distinction between thoughts and feelings and monitor the interplay between the two.

### ■ Needs

Everything that we say and do is motivated by an attempt to fulfill our needs. Needs are understood to be universal and life enriching and are not to be confused with preferences and strategies. For instance, sustenance is a need whereas eating at a 5 star restaurant would not be seen a need. Highlighting needs in conflict situations helps people to connect humanly across differences and direct their attention to the root of issues. And while needs might at times appear to be in conflict, taking the time to dig deeper reveals that conflicts occur at the level of strategies, and not at the level of needs. Examples of needs: love, belonging, trust, connection, respect, honesty etc.

### ■ Requests

In the NVC model, REQUESTS are clear, specific and do-able. Words are chosen that clearly point to what we want and not to what we don't want. We also avoid language that is vague and denies the other person's autonomy. Requests help us to steer clear of submission/rebellion dynamics and instead work towards genuine collaboration.

# Nonviolent Communication Essential Tools

A request is only truly a request if we welcome a NO as much as a YES.

## Alienating Language 4 D's of Disconnection

### ■ Diagnosis

Words that imply rightness/wrongness, label, or compare.  
e.g: good/bad, right/wrong, appropriate/ inappropriate, manipulative, controlling, stupid, loser, racist, alcoholic, should, ought, always, never, not as good as, etc.

### ■ Demands

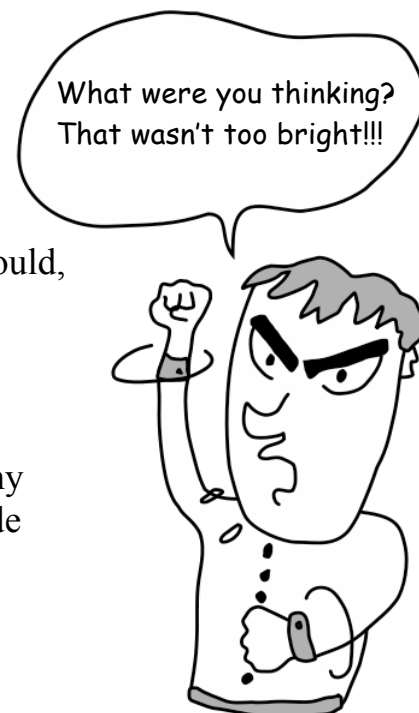
Words that minimize choice and respect for other's autonomy  
e.g: do as I say, you must/have to - these words usually erode goodwill and provoke rebellious or submissive responses.

### ■ Denial of Personal Responsibility

Words that deny one's responsibility and choice with respect to actions taken. These words are disempowering and promote victim mentality.  
e.g: I had to, I have to, the boss said so, it's company policy, that's just the way it is, just following orders, there's no choice, that's life, it's not possible, you/she/he/they make(s) me feel ...

### ■ Deserve Thinking

Words associated with the concept that certain actions merit reward or punishment. Such words motivate extrinsically as opposed to intrinsically.  
e.g: he/she "deserves" ...



It is curious how often you humans manage to obtain that which you do not want.