

NVC feelings + needs working group

Opening exercise:

- Find a feeling word that indicates your current state. Share this with the group.

TOPIC 1: FEELINGS CATEGORIES

Joel Heller's list contains the following categories:

- + uplifted, empowered, engaged, peaceful
- dispirited, disempowered, disengaged, fearful, confused

CNVC provides the following categories:

- + affectionate, engaged, hopeful, confident, excited, grateful, inspired, joyful, exhilarated, peaceful, refreshed
- afraid, annoyed, angry, aversion, confused, disconnected, disquiet, embarrassed, fatigue, pain, sad, tense, vulnerable, yearning

Develop a list of useful feelings categories for when your needs are satisfied:

Develop a list of useful feelings categories for when your needs are not satisfied:

TOPIC 2. "INITIAL FEELINGS" / "FAUX" FEELINGS / VICTIM VERBS

Reactions to judgments and evaluations trigger "initial feelings" — feeling words that are mixed up with implicit blame and criticism (e.g., ignored, annoyed, unappreciated). Focusing our attention, instead, on feelings in relation to specific observations brings clarity and focus to our process. We can then use "cleaner" feeling words that more accurately describe our emotional state without the implicit blame (e.g., sad, unsure, nervous). It is common for NVC groups to use a "feelings" list – but there is not yet a list of "initial feelings" that I am aware of. Let's take some time to develop our own list:

abandoned, abused, attacked, belittled, betrayed, blamed, boxed in, bullied, cheated, coerced, cornered, criticized, discounted, diminished, disliked, distrusted, dumped on, harassed, ignored, insulted, interrupted, intimidated, invalidated, invisible, isolated, left out, let down, manipulated, mistrusted, misunderstood, neglected, overpowered, overworked, patronized, pressured, provoked, put down, rejected, ripped off, smothered, taken for granted, threatened, trampled, tricked, unappreciated, unheard, unloved, unseen, unsupported, unwanted, used, victimized, violated, wronged

additional suggestions:

TOPIC 3: NEEDS CATEGORIES

Joel Heller's list provides the following needs categories:

well-being, safety, connection, understanding, meaning

CNVC provides the following needs categories:

connection, physical well-being, honesty, play, peace, autonomy, meaning

Ike Lasater and John Kinyon break down needs into 3 meta categories and 9 subcategories

well-being (sustenance, safety, order)

connection (love, empathy, belonging)

self-expression (freedom, honesty, meaning)

Which of these approaches lands for you? How would you categorize needs?

TOPIC 4: PSEUDO NEEDS

"Needs" are universal and essential qualities that must be fulfilled in order for human beings to thrive. Pseudo needs are strategies packaged up as needs but still carrying implications of guilt, shame, reward/punishment, and obligation. During an empathy or self-empathy process, we might arrive at a pseudo-need and stop the process right there because we want that to be the right word. Unless we notice a physiological shift within us when we access that word, we can usually ask ourself, "And what would happen if that need were met?" Oftentimes, we will continue on to another, more essential need. Pseudo-needs are at the very beginning of this process – they are similar to "initial feelings" in that they can be a useful point of departure for a self-compassionate yet more thorough process.

Use the needs list and your own experience to identify "pseudo needs" and the potential underlying needs.

pseudo need
recognition

underlying need(s)
belonging

TOPIC 5: CORE NEEDS

Browse through the needs list and identify three of your core, essential needs. When you find a need that resonates, ask yourself, "What would happen if that need were met?" Keep asking this question until you arrive at your core essential needs.