

SAVORING THAT WHICH MAKES LIFE WONDERFUL

“Although I refer to it as 'a process of communication' or a 'language of compassion,' NVC is more than a process or language. On a deeper level, it is an ongoing reminder to keep our attention focused on a place where we are more likely to get what we are seeking.”

- Marshall Rosenberg

When we practice NVC, we keep our attention focused on *needs* - universal qualities that can be fulfilled to help humans thrive. And we see feelings as providers of feedback on whether or not our needs are being met.

Often, we develop feelings and needs literacy by reflecting on situations where we had negative feelings due to some unmet need:

I feel agitated because my need for transparency is not being met.

Yet, in those situations when we *do* get what we were seeking, we often neglect to engage in this framework – seeing it as no longer necessary. We risk missing out on so much that NVC has to offer when we relate to it as a framework that becomes relevant only when we are triggered, thrown into conflict, and our needs are not being fulfilled.

We utilize the processes and distinctions from the NVC framework to get clarity on our needs and formulate clear requests, but then when our needs are actually met.... the framework goes out the window.

NVC is a powerful tool that can guide us in replacing habitual patterns of reactive communication with approaches that better facilitate connection. But we can also use this same tool to savor those moments of connection (with self and others) and in doing so, develop a vivid understanding and deeper engagement with that which makes life wonderful.

I feel energetic and hopeful because my need for acceptance is being met.

Ultimately, developing feelings and needs literacy around those situations where our needs *are* being met allows us to more fully experience the fruits of our requests and life in service to our core essential values.

EXERCISE ONE: POSITIVE EMPATHY GUESSING

Partner A:

Reflect on a fulfilling situation that happened recently.

- What were your observations?
- How were you feeling?

Partner B:

Guess at the needs that were met in this situation.

EXERCISE TWO: EXPRESSING THANKS TO OTHERS

Partner A: facilitate the exercise by reading the prompts.

Partner B: respond to each prompt read by Partner A.

1. Think of a situation where you would like to express thanks.

I'd like to express thanks to Sam for the signs he put in the break room.

2. Indicate the observable action, how you felt when you noticed this action, and what needs this action met.

When I {saw, heard, ...} _____

I felt _____

because I {was wanting, needing, hoping for, want to live in a world where} _____.

When I noticed the signs that Sam placed in the break room,

I felt encouraged

because I was hoping to be heard and to make a difference.

3. Formulate a sentence where you express thanks to this other person in a way that also contains your observations, feelings, and needs.

"Sam, when I noticed you put up the signs in the break room, I felt really encouraged because I understood the suggestions I made in the team meeting were heard and made a difference. This is the kind of work environment I would like to be a part of."