

Non-Violent Communication Practice Group

Facilitator: Edmund Mulligan, edmund@edmundmulligan.name

9-Feb-2022 to 13-Jul-2022, 7pm-9pm UK time

1 Overview

This is a monthly, online group whose purpose is to allow participants to explore and practice their Non-Violent Communication skills. No prior training in Non-Violent Communication is required and I am not charging a fee for these workshops, but I do request that you commit to this process by turning up each month. This is to meet my need to feel valued.

2 Sessions

There are six sessions which take place on the second Wednesday of each month between February and July 2022, inclusive, 7pm UK time. Each session lasts no more than two hours and I will post a link to the zoom meeting in our WhatsApp group a few days before each meeting. If you can't attend a specific session, and obviously stuff does crop up from time to time, please let the group know by posting a WhatsApp message. Please also feel free to use the WhatsApp group to connect with each other between sessions and to make requests of each other. That can include asking if we can spend time in a zoom session on a particular aspect of Non-Violent Communication or if you want to bring a real problem to the group to practice with.

1. Introduction and the skills matrix
2. Compassion and observation
3. Feelings
4. Needs
5. Requests
6. Putting Non-Violent Communication into practice

3 Self Care

Non-Violent Communication is very powerful and it is possible that work within the group may bring up difficult memories or feelings. Everything in the session is by invitation and if you do not want to take part in a particular exercise or game, that is fine. I ask each of you to take responsibility for your own well-being and to engage with the process as much as you are able and no more than that. I commit to providing a safe and supportive space for these workshops, but that also requires you to commit to respecting each others boundaries and limits.

4 Rebel Wisdom Principles

I have found the six principles below, used by Rebel Wisdom in their workshops, valuable and suggest we follow them. If they are unclear or ambiguous (well some of them definitely are ambiguous), feel free to ask in the WhatsApp group — I know there are several participants who have worked with these principles before and can share their understanding.

- Loving the truth
- Confidentiality
- Challenge
- Openness to feedback/reflection
- Not Problem Solving
- Speak from Experience

5 Process

Each session follows a standard process:

1. *Initial Business.* If there are any announcements or administrative business that needs processing before the group begins this is dealt with as swiftly as possible.
2. *Grounding.* We start with a short breathing meditation to ground ourselves and bring ourselves to the group.
3. *Ritual Check In.* Each person checks in with a feeling, a need and whether the need is being met or not. They then commit to being present for the session with the ritual phrase “*I’m in.*”

4. *Personal Check In.* Each person has up to two minutes to say what is alive for them at the moment. For the first session this might be why they have chosen to be part of this group. In later sessions this might touch on their experience of using Non-Violent Communication (or not) over the last month.
5. *Non-Violent Communication practice.* This will vary from session to session but may involve using break out rooms, exploring the differences between observations, thoughts, strategies, feelings and needs, cyclonic enquiry, and practicing making requests either in role play or actual requests between group members.
6. *Wrap up.* We will spend the last few minutes addressing anything that has come up during the practicing that needs addressing. This may also involve setting some homework to practice between sessions.
7. *Ritual Check Out.* Each person checks out with a feeling, a need and whether the need is being met or not. They then signify the end of the session with the ritual phrase “*I’m out.*”
8. *Final Business.* If there is any administrative business that emerged during the group and was parked until the end it can be dealt with at this point.

6 Feedback

Please complete an online feedback form after each session. While this course is in the development and pilot stage, it will allow me to plan the detailed content of each session. After this, it will allow me to improve the delivery of the course.

The online feedback form is located at <https://www.embodied-mind.org/mentoring/non-violent-communication/nvc-feedback-form/>

7 Additional Resources

<https://www.embodied-mind.org/mentoring/non-violent-communication/>
My Non-Violent Communication home page with links to resources used in and useful for this course.

<https://nvctraining.com/classroom/course/view.php?id=171>

A free 30-day online introductory course. When you register you also get 30 days access to their entire NVC library.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonviolent_Communication
Wikipedia article on Non-Violent Communication

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b07q87sm>
An episode of Great Lives from the BBC with Tony Hawkes championing Marshall Rosenberg.

<https://nvc-uk.com/shop/>
A site that sells NVC feelings and needs cards.

8 Quotes

Some quotes from Marshall Rosenberg:

The process of Non-Violent Communication focuses on two questions: “What’s alive in us?” and “What would make life more wonderful?”

Our feelings are connected to our needs. When our needs are being fulfilled we feel pleasurable feelings. When our needs are not being fulfilled we have painful feelings.

Non-Violent Communication is language. Language of a sort that helps us to connect with ourself and others. It’s a language of life. A language based on human feelings and human needs. It’s a language that helps us to communicate what would make life more wonderful for ourselves. But Non-Violent Communication is not only language, it also involves strategies for influencing one another.

Having told people what’s alive in us, if what they are doing is not contributing to our wellbeing then we need to add what could make life more wonderful for us, and to present this to them as an opportunity, as a gift, not as a demand or a threat.

Non-violent communication shows us how to express what’s alive in us and what would make life more wonderful and it shows us how to receive that information empathically from others. How to receive it even if the other person is not articulate in expressing it. So, no matter how the other person is communicating, Non-Violent Communication shows us how to connect with that person’s humanity at any given moment.