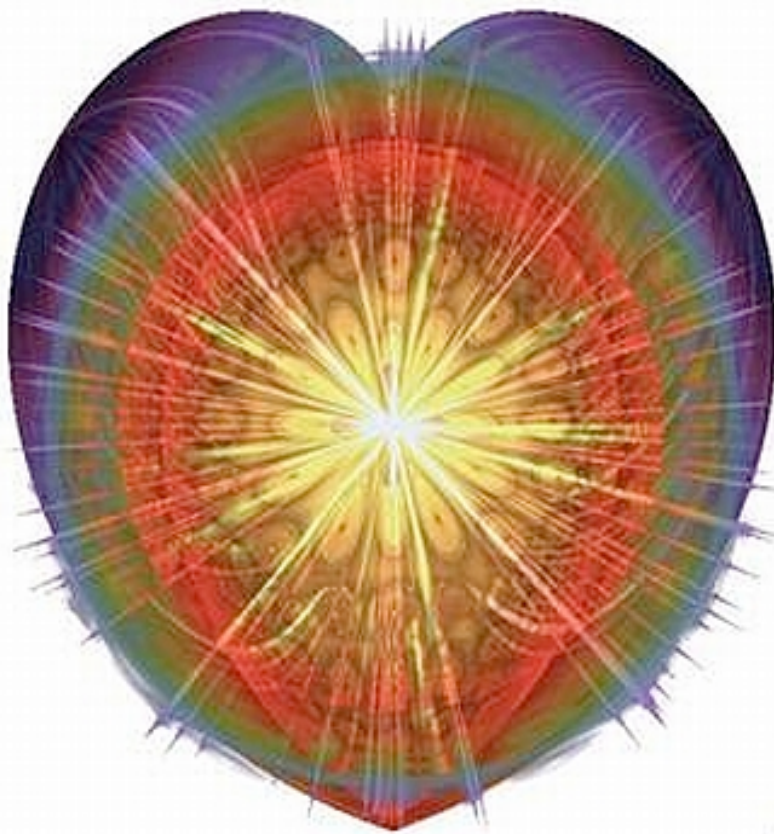


2010 NCC NVC  
Intergenerational  
**Family Camp Village**  
July 17<sup>th</sup> - July 24<sup>th</sup> 2010

Dolstad Farm: 12108 148th Ave SW, Vashon, WA 98070, USA



This manual was originally created and produced by Inbal and Miki Kashton in 2006. Since then, Elana Sabajon has edited and merged some of her own materials into this book. We love sharing our work with people and share it freely. At the same time, we also want to honor the work we're doing and to contribute to our sustainability. Please check with us before sharing this work. If we agree, please include our copyright and contact information, and consider making a contribution to BayNVC and/or inviting the people you pass this material to to make such a contribution.

Center for Nonviolent Communication [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org) • [cnvc@cnvc.org](mailto:cnvc@cnvc.org)  
Northwest Compassionate Communication (NCC) [info@nwcompass.org](mailto:info@nwcompass.org) [www.nwcompass.org](http://www.nwcompass.org)

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## Welcome to Family Camp 2010! From your Camp Hosts, Barb and Doug

Dear Campers,

Welcome to Family Camp! We've been at this for 6 years, and are celebrating that it looks like we're having our biggest camp yet..up to about 113 as we write! We feel sweetly satisfied knowing that so many of you value this opportunity to experience a time and a place where you can be immersed with your family in the spirit of everyone's needs matter, and, along with a community of other families and supporters, live the question: how do we put that intention into action in every day life? We're honored to walk this path with you and look forward to learning and shifting along with you all.

This year, we're excited to try some new things based on feedback from previous years. We'd like to make use of our "Elder" families, those of you who've been here before. We're going to match you with a family who's coming for the first time, so you can help them learn the ropes, give them tips for navigating the schedule and the land, and show them your favorite places take an afternoon snooze. Also, you might want to help each other with childcare, while you each get some personal time. We hope that gives everyone an expanded sense of belonging and support.

Another change is that we're adopting the Open Space format of organizing time and space. Parents will have a menu of workshops to choose from each morning, geared towards parenting topics. In the afternoon, there will be a menu of workshops and activities offered that are geared towards full family participation. We encourage you to offer yourself as an afternoon workshop or activity leader, sharing anything you're inspired to share that others might want to learn or experience. The Open Space format offers a lot freedom and customization of your camp experience, and encourages you to listen to the YES inside your heart as you decide which workshop or activity will best meet your needs. We hope you enjoy that freedom!

We wanted to make even more use of our rich resource of local NVC trainers than we have in the past. Instead of having them all come on one day only, we've invited them to come when they can. So, in the Open Space menu, you'll see a wide variety of workshops offered throughout the week lead by various local trainers.

The Teen Program is expanding it's boundaries this year! They'll be spending a couple of days off campus at the Beach and going into Town for an excursion. We're guessing they'll enjoy this time to be on their own, have camp experiences and make new friends on their own turf.

You'll notice some new landmarks on the Land. On Hillside, we're putting up a 30' yurt to use for trainings and bodywork! We hoped to have it done by camp, and we're sooo close.. Maybe that will be a camp project... We've also created a Communication Center, which we hope will add to everyone's ease in knowing what's happening when. It will also be a place where you can ask for and offer support and share public gratitudes. You can also find out what time it is!

Some things haven't changed. The land is still vast and able to hold all of us with grace. She'll be nourishing our bodies and spirits with bountious salads, gentle breezes, soft sweet grasses, cold pond water, mossy forests, and a bright singing stream. We hope you get to explore her many realms..

We're thrilled that our staff is full of returning faces as well as new. Maren, Elana, Francois, Marcus & Prem are all returning to lead their respective Programs. We have at last count 25 other staff members to support all aspects of camp! We're deeply touched and grateful for this abundance of skilled and dedicated staff!

We're grateful that we get to do all of this, dear families, because of you. We're here to support you, to grow with you, to encourage you, to hold you, and inspire you. Thank you for bringing us together here, on this ancient land, on this beautiful island, to explore in community how we can indeed live a life where everyone's needs do matter: Starting with our own needs..and moving out towards our families, our communities and beyond.

## Welcome From Your Adult Program Coordinator

I, Elana Sabajon, am delighted to welcome you again to our 6th annual Intergeneration NVC Family Camp here on Vashon in the NW.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

--- for making all the big and small choices it takes for you to come!

Despite (and maybe because of) the challenges of parenting in this day and age, you chose to make a difference by coming here, and therefore contributing to social change, transforming the world, your world, one dialogue at a time.

Our intention is to create an environment, a container in which you can take all your doubts, fear, and insecurities, and be held with the utmost care and compassion.

As Barbara and Douglas mention in their 'host welcoming letter', we are adopting the Open Space format to organize time and space. We have diligently worked on the schedule to create a flow in offerings for learning, community and fun. We have a host of guest trainers joining us throughout the week. I am moved and in awe when I think about the richness of gifts going to be shared with each other.

Here, an invitation for self-reflection and celebration: I imagine that most of you are all too aware of the ways you could have been more compassionate, loving, empathic, present with yourself and your child/ren.

At the same time, I'd like you to turn your attention to the ways you are showing up in your children's lives and the world. I am guessing you would not be here, if you hadn't already made significant choices, and set powerful intentions to bring more love, compassion, empathy and consciousness into your life and that of your loved ones. Please, let's celebrate!

I invite you to connect with that world, that part of you within, that knows and is already connected with the needs, from which you make choices for you and your child/ren that are life serving. From that place of self-connection, that fullness, I encourage you to trust yourself, and create the world that you are drawn to create for you and your loved ones.

This year's core adult program team consists of myself, back is Francois (yeah!), Barbara and Douglas will join us every other day (hurrah!), George is back with his incredible support and our beloved Rena is joining the adult realm this year as well. In addition to we have guest trainers coming in and out from as far as Portland, OR.

Let's continue to co-create the world this week, we are so much wanting to live in - a world in which it is safe, and fun to be a child, a parent, a person. A world, full of compassion, love, empathy and care - a world in which everyone knows that their needs matter, and where creating and sustaining life serving connections with ourselves and others is the ultimate goal.

Many blessings - with tender and loving care,  
Elana Sabajon

## **Greetings from Youth Program Coordinator!**

Greetings everyone! I am very excited to see you all, and also to get to be part of and serve this event and community once again. This year I have the honor of supporting a fantastic staff of 12 individuals that I feel proud and excited to get to play with all week. We are looking forward to our pre-camp bonding time, as well as the opening day of camp when we get to welcome those who have come before, as well as meet everyone and begin our journey together. I am present with the sweetness of camps passed and the ways in which these events have so deeply contributed to my life.

In this document we want to offer a basic outline of the structure of the youth program so you can feel connected with us, the space, and the rhythm of our week. We also offer this so that you can **\*\*support your child in having clarity and finding fulfillment and support in the program.\*\***

We continue to hold a "open space" faire format during youth program time, offering children structured learning, entertainment, and support within a realm of free choice. There will be designated spaces and booths that children can access or step into, with facilitators (entitled "Guides") engaging, making offerings, and overseeing each space. There will also be designated "Rovers" who are out and about, ready to witness, step in, guide, or help engage children when they may desire a little more freedom, creative choice or space, or need support in engaging in another way. We hope to hear from the kids over the week about things that they are enjoying or inspired to do. We joyfully take suggestions and requests with the intention of supporting these ideas to come to fruition. You may have noticed that the youth program contains a high adult to child ratio. The purpose of this is to support the most connection possible and also to create a space for real time, colloquial Giraffe/NVC in a natural example rather than an instructional format. It is our hope to be with what is alive with the kids in a space of authentic play & following aliveness while modeling deep self connection and presence.

The booths and offering spaces will include, though in no way be limited to, the following categories:

- \*Craft Caravan Tidy Crafts: Paper craft, beading, drawing... Messy Crafts: mask making, clay, paper, tie dye...
- \*Game Tipi (Hillside Tipi) (board, card and mental games, to be checked out from game tipi guide)
- \*Cherry Tree Dungeon (A hide-out/hang out space located behind the Game Tent)
- \*Magic Carnival (juggling, stilt walking, streamers, tricks, acro-balancing, face painting etc)
- \*Toddler Tent (blocks, soft toys, board books etc. directly adjacent to the sand box)
- \*Large Field beyond right and wrong doing (Soccer, badminton, etc)
- \*Small Field (capture the flag, bubbles, obstacle course, hug tag)

### **\*\*IMPORTANT FACTS TO KNOW\*\***

1. A mystery list of activities will be revealed each morning during the **\*SLIDE SHOW\*** at the main youth tent bulletin board area. Be prepared to be shocked, delighted and amazed! Please have your child there on time to insure the greatest level of connection and engagement.
2. While our first priority is to be present and engaged with children during program time, we are also very interested in connecting with you about your child. If possible, please try to connect with us outside of program time regarding any important information that may serve us and them. Myself or the rovers are your best bet for connection if you need to connect during program time.
3. The pool is NOT part of the youth program. It will be available during family time with parental supervision only.
4. We may be inspired to sporadically take some or all of the children on an adventure or hike to the forest or beach (potentially off site) during program time. Please let us know if there might be a need or issue around this prior to program beginning on Wednesday morning.
5. Program coordinators will have radios if there is a need to communicate with your child or a coordinator.
6. 1st aid kits are located at the kitchen area, Youth Program area and the Yurt.
7. Your child will need some kind of protection from the sun. While the activity booths are in the shade, there are still many activities and opportunities where they will have sun exposure. Please make sure that they are wearing sunscreen before they arrive in the morning.
8. We would prefer that all digital or media devices (game boys, i-pods etc) be left in your tent or vehicle to support us in having more of an opportunity to connect with your child. Please connect with me (Maren) prior to camp if you or anyone in your family has a concern around this.
9. There will be an artwork table or box near the craft caravan tent, there will also be a LOST & FOUND box. Please check these regularly to gather their work & keep our space tidy.

With deep gratitude and warmth, Maren

## Welcome from the Teen Staff

We (Marcus, Seneca, and Katherine) are thrilled to be co-creating the teen program at Family Camp with you this year. We are bubbling with ideas, excited to hear yours, and can't wait to get to spend the week up at camp with you.

It is our intention and highest hope to hold a space for teens at camp where we can have a whole lot of fun, feel all parts of ourselves honored, and have more ease and joy in connecting with our families.

We are looking forward to sharing conversations about what it feels like and means to be a teen, a parent of a teen, or a younger sibling of teen, and to holding every part of that equation with deep respect and care. And most exciting of all are the juicy prospects for more of the deep friendship and loving community that happened last year (and before!).

We want to share with you some of the basic structure of the teen program as we have envisioned it, both so that you can be getting prepared and to receive your feedback:

- We plan to have an initial welcome with the teen group on Saturday afternoon at 4:15 pm.
- Tweens and teen siblings will meet for dinner with the Teen and Youth Staff to discuss what its like being a sibling of a teen or being a tween at 6:00 pm.
- After the all-camp ceremony we are inviting parents of teens to attend an info session with the Teen Staff so we can connect, establish some shared understandings of how we are holding the teen group, and receive your questions and requests at 8:15 pm.
- On the first night, we will ask teens to sleep with their families.
- On Sunday afternoon we will have a teen-parent "fishbowl discussion"—a facilitated conversation container that increases the likelihood of each person getting heard and often leads to great mutual understanding in groups where there sometimes seem to be thick walls—to talk about teens' and parents' hopes, concerns, excitements and fears for the week and in general.
- After the "fishbowl" the teen group will hike out to Corbin Beach where we will stay two nights on our own, until the rest of camp comes and joins us on Tuesday evening for dinner.
- When we are at camp, we will gather in the morning at 10:30am, which will give teens a chance to participate as leaders in the first hour of the youth program, to sleep in, or have whatever kind of a morning they need to have.
- Sometimes the afternoons will be unscheduled and sometimes we will offer activities, but we will always gather again in the evenings.
- After the first night we will have a teen area where teens who wish to will be able to sleep in one area with the teen staff. Because of the size of the group, we will be in a new location this year—we are sadly, but excitingly, too big a group for the teepee!
- On Thursday we will take a trip to downtown Vashon to eat pizza and hang out in town for the afternoon.
- On Friday (and possibly other days) teen staff together with adult trainers will be offering teen-parent coaching sessions where we can sit down and playfully or seriously look at some of the places where we are having challenges connecting.

Wow! That's a lot of details, and we haven't even gotten to all the fun-filled games, role-plays, and more! If you have questions or feedback, please don't hesitate to get in touch by emailing Marcus at [marcusliefert@gmail.com](mailto:marcusliefert@gmail.com).

We look forward to seeing you soon! Many blessings, and joyful giggles,  
Marcus, Katherine, and Seneca

p.s. Teens: Stay tuned for invitations to join a Facebook group for more pre-camp communications!

## Who's Who at Camp?

**CAMP HOSTS Douglas Dolstad & Barbara Larson**

**YOUTH PROGRAM Maren Metke (Coordinator)**

Morgan Guion  
Wendy Garrido  
Rain Sheehan  
Jared Finkelstein  
Johnny Colden  
Marina Barnes  
Kelly Shannon  
Andy Kim  
Lynn Smith  
Soraya Dean  
Cristie Holliday

**ADULT PROGRAM Elana Sabajon (Coordinator)**

Francois Beausoleil  
Rena Patty  
George Kirkwood  
Douglas Dolstad  
Barbara Larson  
and a Host of Guest Trainers

**TEEN PROGRAM Marcus Liefert (Coordinator)**

Katherine Betts  
Seneca Miller

**KITCHEN CREW Prem Carnot (Coordinator)**

Emily Vogt  
Ananda Hirsch  
Kristen Jawad  
Eliza Cantor  
Barbara Ehrenfried  
DISH WASH SUPPORT: Lauren Brown & Josiah Mitchell

**SITE & FACILITIES Douglas Dolstad (Coordinator)**

Clayton Barker  
Josiah Mitchell

**ADMINISTRATIVE Barbara Larson (Coordinator)**

Joan Judson  
Dinah Smith

**VIDEOGRAPHY Velcro Ripper (Coordinator)**

Dinah Smith  
Taylor Duvall



**GO-TO PEOPLE**

<b>CAMP ROLE</b>	<b>WHO</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Site Liaison	Doug Dolstad	The Go To person for Site/Facility requests or feedback
Kitchen Liaison		The Go To person for folks wanting to make food requests to the kitchen. OR, please put it in writing in the Food Request Box right outside the Kitchen!
Youth Program Liaison Coordinator	Maren Metke	Serves as liaison to the "youngers" youth program team for questions/requests around structure of the program and general concerns. Please approach her before or after any program session. Direct contact with program staff is encouraged.
Teen Program Contact		Fields requests/questions relating to the teen group. Please approach before or after the program.
Adult Program Contact	Elana Sabajon	Fields requests/questions relating to the Adult Program. Please approach her before or after any Program Session.
Den Mother to our Volunteer Staff	Barbara Larson	Helps our Volunteer Staff get oriented to camp and feel at home. Answers Volunteer's questions & concerns.
Beauty and Order		The Go To person for Beauty and Order requests or feedback.
Pooh Guruh	Clayton Barker	The Go To person for requests or feedback on the condition of the compost toilets.
Announcer	George Kirkwood	During breakfast, present to all the group any announcements for the day. Make any new day's announcements at start of morning session. Communicate to children's/youth team any announcements that are relevant to the children. Post announcements in the Communication Center.

**ON SITE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

We are looking for your support in making this a smooth and joyous experience for us all. Your contribution of time and energy keeps our costs lower and gives you the opportunity to connect with each other and build community. Please include the children in these

tasks to the extent it is fun and easy for everyone. Please sign up on the community board in the Communication Center. See all the opportunities on the next page, please.

<b>VOLUNTEER ROLE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>SIGN UP</b>
Menu board writer	Checks in with Prem in the kitchen at 6:45 every morning about the menu of the day and writes it down on the white board in front of kitchen.	Communication Center
Breakfast Servers	2 volunteers to stand behind the food table and serve food.	Communication Center
Clean/wipe tables after breakfast	2 volunteers to wipe the tables after breakfast	Communication Center
Kitchen breakfast dishwashers	Clean the kitchen pots, pans, serving bowls, serving utensils...etc	Communication Center
Snack AM Preparation/Serve *	At 9:30 help prepare and serve AM snacks. Snack is at 10:30.	Communication Center
Water and Coffee Counter	Fill the water in the coolers as well verify the water in the tea kettle is sufficient	Communication Center
Lunch Servers	3 volunteers stand behind the food table and serves food.	Communication Center
Clean/wipe tables after lunch	2 volunteers wiping the tables after lunch, indoors and outdoors	Communication Center
Kitchen lunch dishwashers (great fun for a family!)	Cleans the kitchen pots, pans, serving bowls, serving utensils...etc	Communication Center
PM Snack Preparation*	Help prepare and serve PM snacks. Snack is at 3:45.	Communication Center
Dinner Servers	3 volunteers stand behind the food table and serve food.	Communication Center
Clean/wipe tables after dinner	2 volunteers cleaning/wiping the tables after dinner, indoors and outdoors	Communication Center
Kitchen Dinner dishwashers (great fun for a family!)	Cleans the kitchen pots, pans, serving bowls, serving utensils...etc	Communication Center
Garden Shower Refiller	Checks on and Refills the Garden Solar Shower as needed (probably every other day) See Doug	Communication Center
Trash and Compost	Manage camp trash and compost flow.	Communication Center

<b>Basic Daily Schedule (see weekly schedule for specifics)</b>	
<b>TIME</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>
7:00-8:30	<b>BREAKFAST</b> 8:00 - 8:30 - [Coreteam meeting: Doug, Barbara, Maren, Marcus, Elana] 8:30 - 9:15 -[All-staff meet in Realms; staff kids play w/ other families if possible]
8:30-9:00	CLEAN-UP eating area;
9:00- 9:30	TRANSITION - from family time to Village Program
9:30-12:20	<b>VILLAGE PROGRAM</b> 9:30-9:45 Youth Program Slide Show (all camp can observe) 9:45-12:20 Youth Program 10:30-12:20 Teen Program 9:45-10:30 Parent Community Circle 10:45-12:20 OPEN SPACE Break Out Sessions for Parents
10:30-10:45	<b>SNACK</b> in separate groups
12:30-1:30	<b>LUNCH</b>
1:30-1:45	CLEAN-UP AND TRANSITION -
1:45- 2:40	<b>PARENTS:</b> Empathy groups <b>YOUTH:</b> Empathy, check-in groups, and/or activities led by youth program team.
2:45 PM	PARENTS collect your children from youth team at 2:45.
3:00- 4:00	[Empathy groups for staff] [staff children hang w/ other families if possible.]
3:45-4:15	<b>SNACK</b>
4:00-4:15	TRANSITION
4:15-5:45	<b>OPEN SPACE Session:</b> Family-oriented workshops offered by staff, empowered participants, individual sessions, family time, self-care time, pool time, mediations, restorative circles, integration, etc. Parents responsible for their own children's well being.
5:45-6:00	TRANSITION
6:00-7:00	<b>DINNER</b> (Staff Special Event Meeting) -OR- (All Staff Meeting- connection, integration, celebration, need to knows. Strong request to the staff to be present, with communication if you choose self care another way) - please check your weekly schedule for clarity
7:00-7:30	CLEAN-UP AND TRANSITION
7:30- 8:30	<b>Community Time:</b> Game night, Family Empathy (real life/time NVC), Beach night, Fire Circle, Community variety show/sharing...
8:30- 8:45	Transition Time

8:45- 9:30	(All Staff Meeting- connection, integration, celebration, need to knows. Strong request to the staff to be present, with communication if you choose self care another way) -OR- (Staff Special Event Meeting) - please check your weekly schedule for clarity.
9:00	<b>QUIET TIME FOR THE NIGHT</b>

## Week at a Glance (specifics)

	Sat 7/17	Sun 7/18	Mon 7/19	Tues 7/20	Wed 7/21	Thurs 7/22	Fri 7/23	Sat 7/24
7:00 - 9:30		7-8:30 Breakfast 8-8:30 Core mtg 8:30-9:15 Staff Realm meetings	7-8:30 Breakfast 8-8:30 Core 8:30-9:15 Staff Realm meetings	7-8:30 Breakfast 8-8:30 Core 8:30-9:15 Staff Realm meetings	7-8:30 Breakfast 8-8:30 Core 8:30-9:15 Staff Realm meetings	7-8:30 Breakfast 8-8:30 Core 8:30-9:15 Staff Realm meetings	7-8:30 Breakfast 8-8:30 Core 8:30-9:15 Staff Realm meetings	7-8:30 Breakfast 8-8:30 Core 8:30-9:15 Staff Realm meetings
9:30 - 12:20		9:30-10:10 Families Gather for All Camp Announcements  Meet Your Co Family/s. Scavenger Hunt  10:10- Slide Show for Family Fair. 10:20- Family Fair begins 11:20 Families w/staff support refine, discuss, reflect, & harvest agreements	Village Program Adult Program Youth Program Teens camp at Corbin Beach	Village Program Adult Program Youth Program Teens camp at Corbin Beach	9 - 9:30 Q&A for parents of teens w/ teen staff  Village Program Adult Program Youth Program 10:30-12:20 Teens Program	Village Program Adult Program Youth Program 10:30-12:20 Teens Program	Village Program Adult Program Youth Program 10:30-12:20 Teens Program	9:30 - 10:30 Village Program  10:40-11:30 Camp Clean-Up  11:45-12:25 Closing Ceremony
12:30	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:45 - 2:45	Campers Arrive	1:45-3:15 Teen / Parent Fishbowl  Empathy groups: non-teen parents Youth program	Parent Empathy Grps Meet  Youth Program Teens: Corbin Beach	Parent Empathy Grps Meet  Youth Program Teens: Corbin Beach	Parent Empathy Grps Meet  Youth Program	Parent Empathy Grps Meet  Youth Program	Parent Empathy Grps Meet  Youth Program	Departure
3:00-4:00	Campers Arrive	Staff Empathy	Staff Empathy	Staff Empathy	Staff Empathy	Staff Empathy	Staff Empathy	
4:15-5:45	Teens and Teen Staff welcome	Open Space	Open Space	Open Space	Open Space	Open Space Teen Trip to Dinner in Town	Open Space	
6-7 dinner	teenSiblings/tweens meet w/teen & youth staff	Sp. Event Staff meeting	Sp Event Staff meeting	Dinner at Corbin Beach	All Staff Meeting	All Staff Meeting - teens in town	All Staff Meeting	
7:30-8:30	7:15-8:00 Community Welcome Ceremony  8:15 Teen parents and teen staff	Community Game Night	Real Time/Life Family nvc & Empathy games	Community time at Corbin Beach	Teen Roll Plays and Theatre for community	Real Time/Life Family nvc & Empathy games	Community Variety Show & Sharing	
9:00	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	Quiet Time	

8:45-9:30	Teens and Teen Staff "All" staff Meeting	All Staff meeting	All Staff meeting	All Staff meeting	Sp Event Staff Meeting		Teen Program Closure	
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## Daily Journal/ Calendar, Sunday, July 18, 2010

Time	Volunteer *Job*	Open Space offering	Facilitator	Where	Description
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
1:45-3:15 Teen/ Parent fish-bowl					
1:45-2:45 Empathy grp					
4:15-5:45 Open Space					
<b>PM</b>					
7:30-8:30 Community Time					

Notes, Questions, Celebrations, Mournings:

## Daily Journal/Calendar, Monday, July 19, 2010

Time	Volunteer *Job*	Open Space offering	Facilitator	Where	Description
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
1:45-2:45 Empathy grp					
4:15-5:45 Open Space					
<b>PM</b>					
7:30-8:30 Community Time					

Notes, Questions, Celebrations, Mournings:

## Daily Journal/ Calendar, Tuesday, July 20, 2010

Time	Volunteer *Job*	Open Space offering	Facilitator	Where	Description
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
1:45-2:45 Empathy grp					
4:15-5:45 Open Space					
<b>PM</b>					
Dinner & Community Time at Corbin Beach					

Notes, Questions, Celebrations, Mournings:

## Daily Journal/ Calendar, Wednesday, July 21, 2010

Time	Volunteer *Job*	Open Space offering	Facilitator	Where	Description
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
1:45-2:45 Empathy grp					
4:15-5:45 Open Space					
<b>PM</b>					
7:30-8:30 Community Time					

Notes, Questions, Celebrations, Mournings:



## Daily Journal/ Calendar, Thursday, July 22, 2010

Time	Volunteer *Job*	Open Space offering	Facilitator	Where	Description
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
1:45-2:45 Empathy grp					
4:15-5:45 Open Space					
<b>PM</b>					
7:30-8:30 Community Time					

Notes, Questions, Celebrations, Mournings:

## Daily Journal/ Calendar, Friday, July 23, 2010

Time	Volunteer *Job*	Open Space offering	Facilitator	Where	Description
<b>AM</b>					
<b>PM</b>					
1:45-2:45 Empathy grp					
4:15-5:45 Open Space					
<b>PM</b>					
7:30-8:30 Community Time					
Teen Closing Program					

Notes, Questions, Celebrations, Mournings:

## Daily Journal/ Calendar, Saturday, July 24, 2010

Time	Volunteer *Job*	Open Space offering	Facilitator	Where	Description
AM					
PM					

Notes, Questions, Celebrations, Mournings:

**Follow up Family Camp calls:**

**Saturday August, 21st, 7:45 am - 8:45 AM**

**September:**

**October:**

## Nonviolent Communication Quick Reference Guide

Expression	Empathy
<b>Observation</b> When I see/hear . . .	[Observation] [When you see/hear . . .]
<b>Feeling</b> I feel . . .	<b>Feeling</b> Are you feeling . . .
<b>Need</b> Because I need . . .	<b>Need</b> Because you need . . .
<b>Request</b> Would you be willing...?	[Request] [Would you like...?]

**Observations:** Description of what is seen or heard without added interpretations. For example, instead of "She's having a temper tantrum," you could say "She is lying on the floor crying and kicking." If referring to what someone said quote as much as possible instead of rephrasing.

**Feelings:** Our emotions rather than our story or thoughts about what others are doing. For example, instead of "I feel manipulated," which includes an interpretation of another's behavior, you could say "I feel uncomfortable." Avoid the following phrasing: "I feel like . . ." and "I feel that..."—the next words will be thoughts, not feelings.

**Needs:** Feelings are caused by needs, which are universal and ongoing and not dependent on the actions of particular individuals. State your need rather than the other person's actions as the cause. For example, "I feel annoyed because I need support" rather than "I feel annoyed because you didn't do the dishes."

**Requests:** Asking concretely and clearly for what we want (instead of what we don't want). For example, "Would you be willing to come back tonight at the time we've agreed?" rather than "Would you make sure not to be late again?" By definition, when we make requests we are open to hearing a "no," taking it as an opportunity for further dialogue.

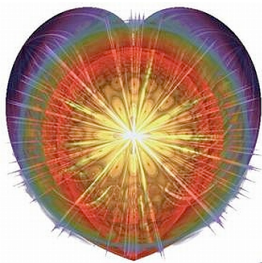
**Empathy:** In NVC, we empathize with others by guessing their feelings and needs. Instead of trying to "get it right," we aim to understand. The observation and request are sometimes dropped. When words are not wanted or are hard to offer, empathy can be offered silently.

**Self-Empathy:** In self-empathy, we listen inwardly to connect with our own feelings and needs. It is that connection which enables us to choose our next step

# Key Assumptions and Principles of NVC

## I. Assumptions Underlying the Practice of Nonviolent Communication

1. **Universality of Human Needs:** We all have the same needs. Where we differ from each other is in our strategies to connect/meet needs. Conflicts occur at the level of strategies, not needs.
2. **Needs and Feelings:** Feelings result from the recognition and attention to needs or not: Our feelings are directly related to our needs. When our needs are recognized and attended to, we feel happy, satisfied, excited, etc. When our needs are not recognized and attended to, we feel sad, scared, angry, etc. (These are the words of Elana Sabajon)
3. **Actions Result from Needs:** Our actions are motivated by a desire to connect to needs. We would prefer to meet needs in ways that don't harm others if we recognize a path of action that will also meet our own needs. Even when we resort to violence, we are still attempting to meet needs, however tragically.
4. **Natural Giving:** It is deeply inherent in the nature of human beings that we enjoy contributing to others, and will do so if we can trust that we can choose not to contribute without suffering consequences.
5. **Sufficiency:** Though in individual situations it appears that there isn't enough to meet everyone's needs, there is no inherent scarcity for meeting everyone's basic needs; through dialogue and connection we can meet more people's needs more peaceful



## II. Key Principles of Nonviolent Communication

We choose to act in line with the following principles because we believe that using this approach we are more likely to contribute to a world where everyone's needs are attended to peacefully.

1. **Responsibility for Our Feelings:** We aim to move away from blaming ourselves or others for our feelings, by connecting our feelings to our own needs. This recognition empowers us to take action to meet our needs instead of waiting for others to change.
2. **Responsibility for Our Actions:** We aim to recognize our choice in each moment, and take action based on seeing how it would meet our needs to do so; we aim to move away from taking action based on fear, guilt, shame, the desire for reward, or any "should" or "have to".
3. **Prioritizing Connection:** We aim to focus on connection instead of immediate solutions, and to trust that connecting with our own and others' needs is more likely to lead to creating solutions that meet everyone's needs.
4. **Equal Care for Everyone's Needs:** We aim to make requests and not demands; when hearing a "No" to our request, or when saying "No" to another's request, we aim to work towards solutions that meet everyone's needs, not just our own, and not just the other person's.
5. **Self-Expression:** When expressing ourselves, we aim to speak from the heart, expressing our feelings and needs, and making specific, do-able requests rather than demands.
6. **Empathic Hearing:** When we hear others, we aim to hear the feelings and needs behind their expressions, even when they express judgments or demands.
7. **Protective Use of Force:** We aim to use force only to protect, not to punish others or get our way without the other's agreement, and only in situations where the principles above were not sufficient to meet immediate needs for safety. We aim to return to dialogue as soon as safety is re-established.

# Feelings

Feelings are likely to be present when our needs are recognized and attended to or not: This list is neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is meant as a starting place to support anyone who wishes to engage in a process of deepening self-discovery and to facilitate greater understanding and connection between people.

This Feelings List is put together by [BayNVC](http://BayNVC.org), 55 Santa Clara Ave., Suite 203, Oakland, CA 94610, ph: 510-433-0700, fax: 510-452-3900, [nvc@baynvc.org](mailto:nvc@baynvc.org), [www.baynvc.org](http://www.baynvc.org)

<b><u>PEACEFUL</u></b>	<b><u>LOVING</u></b>	<b><u>GLAD</u></b>	<b><u>PLAYFUL</u></b>	<b><u>INTERESTED</u></b>
tranquil calm content engrossed absorbed expansive serene loving blissful satisfied relaxed relieved quiet carefree composed fulfilled	warm affectionate tender appreciative friendly sensitive compassionate grateful nurtured amorous trusting open thankful radiant adoring passionate	happy excited hopeful joyful satisfied delighted encouraged grateful confident inspired touched proud exhilarated ecstatic optimistic glorious	energetic effervescent invigorated zestful refreshed impish alive lively exuberant giddy adventurous mischievous jubilant goofy buoyant electrified	involved inquisitive intense enriched absorbed alert aroused astonished concerned curious eager enthusiastic fascinated intrigued surprised helpful
<b><u>MAD</u></b>	<b><u>SAD</u></b>	<b><u>SCARED</u></b>	<b><u>TIRED</u></b>	<b><u>CONFUSED</u></b>
impatient pessimistic disgruntled frustrated irritable, edgy grouchy agitated exasperated disgusted irked cantankerous animosity bitter rancorous irate, furious angry hostile enraged violent	lonely heavy troubled helpless gloomy overwhelmed distant despondent discouraged distressed dismayed disheartened despairing sorrowful unhappy depressed blue miserable dejected melancholy	afraid fearful terrified startled nervous jittery horrified anxious worried anguished lonely insecure sensitive shocked apprehensive dread jealous desperate suspicious frightened	exhausted fatigued inert lethargic indifferent weary overwhelmed fidgety helpless heavy sleepy disinterested reluctant passive dull bored listless blah comatose	frustrated perplexed hesitant troubled uncomfortable withdrawn apathetic embarrassed hurt uneasy irritated suspicious unsteady puzzled restless boggled chagrined unglued detached skeptical

## Universal Human Needs

This Needs List is put together by BayNVC, 55 Santa Clara Ave., Suite 203, Oakland, CA 94610, ph: 510-433-0700, fax: 510-452-3900, [nvc@baynvc.org](mailto:nvc@baynvc.org), [www.baynvc.org](http://www.baynvc.org)

The following list is neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is meant as a starting place to support anyone who wishes to engage in a process of deepening self-discovery and to facilitate greater understanding and connection between people.

<p><b><u>CONNECTION</u></b>  acceptance / self-acceptance  affection  appreciation  belonging  caring  closeness  communication  community  companionship  compassion  consideration  consistency  cooperation  dignity  emotional safety  empathy  familiarity  fellowship  inclusion  interdependence  intimacy  love  mutuality  nurturing  partnership  reciprocity  respect / self-respect  safety  security  self-worth  sensitivity  solidarity  stability  support  to know and be known  to see and be seen  to understand  to be understood  trust</p>	<p><b><u>HONESTY</u></b>  authenticity  congruence  continuity  integrity  presence  transparency</p> <p><b><u>PLAY</u></b>  adventure  fun  humor  joy  laughter  mischief  spontaneity</p> <p><b><u>PHYSICAL WELL-BEING</u></b>  air  balance  comfort  food  movement / exercise  protection  rest / sleep  relaxation  sexual expression  safety (protection from life-threatening situations)  shelter  thriving  touch  water</p> <p><b><u>AUTONOMY</u></b>  choice  confidence  freedom  independence  privacy</p>	<p><b><u>MEANING</u></b>  aliveness  awareness  awe  celebration of life  challenge  clarity  competence  consciousness  contribution (to exercise one's power by giving that which contributes to life)  creativity  discovery  efficacy  effectiveness  growth  learning  mourning  mystery  participation  purpose  self-expression  stimulation  understanding  wholeness  wonder</p> <p><b><u>PEACE</u></b>  beauty  ease  equality  equanimity  harmony  inspiration  order  spiritual communion  Tranquility  warmth</p>
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## Colloquial Expression of Needs

The information on this page is put together by BayNVC, 55 Santa Clara Ave., Suite 203, Oakland, CA 94610, ph: 510-433-0700, fax: 510-452-3900, [nvc@baynvc.org](mailto:nvc@baynvc.org), [www.baynvc.org](http://www.baynvc.org)

The phrases below are some suggestions for how you can expand the range of options available to you for expressing your needs and for guessing those of others (instead of always using the word “need”). On the dotted line you can insert any word from the needs inventory in the previous page.

All of these phrases can be used as long as the consciousness we bring to them is that of needs. Otherwise we run the risk of blurring the distinction between needs and strategies.

I love.....

I thrive on....

I really enjoy....

I would be nourished by....

It's important to me to have....

I value....

I want....

.... is fun for me

.... matters to me

.... makes my life feel worthwhile

..... helps me feel well/good/whole/happy

## The Secret of Requests

(adapted from Inbal and Miki Kashtan and Robert Gonzales)

Requests are the key to getting connected to our needs, and attending to them. Once you are aware what need(s) you are wanting to connect to or attend to, clarify your intention first:

- Is the request giving the other person or yourself an opportunity to contribute to life meaningfully and to do so willingly?
- Are you in any way attached to an outcome?
- How would you respond if you hear a 'no' to your request?
- Are you aware of more than 3 ways to attend to your need?

There are 4 Characteristics of Requests that will increase the likelihood of connecting to your needs and attending to them satisfactorily:

1. Phrasing the request in the present versus a future action:  
--- are you willing to agree right now to take the trash out before you go to bed tonight?
2. Phrasing the request as specific as possible versus vaguely or general:  
--- are you willing to agree right now to take the trash out before you go to bed tonight?
3. Phrasing the request in positive action language versus negative (do versus don't):  
--- are you willing to agree right now to take the trash out before you go to bed tonight? Versus --- are you willing to not forget to take the trash out tonight before you go to bed tonight?
4. Phrasing the request in do-able matter versus asking for an attitude or intention:  
--- are you willing to agree right now to take the trash out before you go to bed tonight? Versus: --- are you willing to keep in mind to take the trash out?

Again: Make present, specific, positive and do-able requests!

I distinguish between 2 Kinds of Requests:

1. Connection Requests
2. Action/Solution Requests

## 1. Connection Requests:

--- These support a quality of connection that enhances understanding and empathy between the participating partners.

Following are sample requests supporting the quality of connection:

Would you be willing to tell me what you just heard me say?

Would you be willing to tell me your understanding of my feelings and needs?

Would you be willing to listen to me talk about my experience?

Would you be willing to tell me how you are feeling about what you just heard me say?

Would you be willing to tell me what specifically I can do that would help you feel more confident that I understand what you are saying?

Following are sample requests supporting connection towards a solution:

Would you be willing to tell me what you need to know in order to agree to my request?

Would you be willing to tell me what needs of yours are preventing you from saying yes to my request?

Would you be willing to tell me what you are hearing in my expression that's leading you to say no to my request?

Would you be willing to brainstorm together to come up with solutions that would work for both of us?

Would you be willing to tell me if there is any way for us to work this out other than my agreeing to your request?

Would you be willing to tell me if you imagine any other strategies that would meet both of our needs?

## 2. Action/Solution Requests:

--- These support getting our needs met via an action.

Example: Would you be willing to take the trash out right now?

Another tool is the P L A T O model:

P people

L location

A action

T time

O object

Are you (P) willing to agree (A) right now (T) to take the trash (O) out before you go to bed tonight?

## Common Habitual Expressions Translated to Conscious Communication

Many times we use phrases in our language that suggest, we have no responsibility for our feelings and actions, no choice and/or things happen to us.

For example: **"I feel that you are not listening to me"**.

"I feel that ....", is in my assessment an expressing of a thought (which is NOT a feeling) of someone not listening. The second half of the sentence, "... you are not listening" is placing blame on the 'listener' for my feelings and expressing a belief of 'I have no power or choice'.

Here are some suggested translations of common habitual expressions and their alternatives that provide more ownership, responsibility and a sense of choice.

### Acknowledging Choice:

I can't ...	I choose not to ... I don't know how to ... I don't feel comfortable with that ... I don't want to
I have to ... I should ... I ought to ... I must ...	I choose to ... I want to ... I get to ... I will ...

### Distinguishing between Thoughts and Feelings and Perceptions:

I feel that you ... I feel that I ... I feel that we ... I feel that s/he ... etc.	I feel (following up with a feeling word) eg: exhilarated ..., discombobulated ... In my opinion ... My assumptions is ... I believe ... I think ... I have a thought ...
It makes me ... You make me ... S/he makes me ...	I feel (following up with a feeling word) eg: happy ... ambivalent ...

### Acknowledging Ownership:

One would think ...	I think ... My opinion is ...
Have we peed our pants?	Have you peed your pants?
Don't you think?	I think ...
Let's do something.	I'd like to ... would you like to ...

### Acknowledging Subjectivity of Perception & Judgment:

It is hot/dark.	I believe/ perceive/ judge it is hot/dark.
This is good/bad.	I believe this is good/bad .....
This is brilliant.	I perceive it as brilliant.

### Acknowledging Generalizations:

You always say that.	I heard you say that before.
It never stops raining in Seattle.	It has rained for 3 weeks every day and I am feeling weary and down and would like to experience some lightness.
All corvettes drivers drive fast.	I felt frightened when the corvette past by me. I want to be safe on the road.

### Encouraging Inclusion and Appreciation:

I enjoyed last night but ....	I enjoyed last night and ...
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## Empathy Group Leaders' Tips

Leading an empathy group whose focus is connection and empathy rather than practice requires both participating in the empathy and maintaining awareness of whether the process is supporting the person receiving the empathy. This is not a time for direct coaching, which might include expressions such as this: "Instead of focusing on the story and repeating it, focus on her feelings and needs". Rather, it is a time for leading by example by focusing on empathy, for gentle suggestions, and for trusting one's sense of the effect of the process on the receiver.

**Here are a few guidelines we hope will support you in this role:**

1. If you sense the empathy guess is taking the person out of her or his heart and into her or his thoughts or judgments, check in by asking: "Is this connecting for you?" If not, encourage the person and the group to re-focus on the present moment with guesses of feelings and needs.
2. If the group goes into analysis of the person's "issue" or into advice-giving when it has not been requested, you might also redirect the flow by saying, "I really want us to stay with Sarah's heart now," then follow with an empathy guess that focuses clearly on the need: "Sarah, are you longing for more joy in your life?"
3. If you sense that a role-play might contribute to healing or movement, suggest that to the person receiving empathy. If one is wanted, ask whether they'd like to choose someone for the role-play, or ask others if they'd like to participate if no preference is expressed. If you have a sense your participation would be the most supportive, you could volunteer by saying, "Would you like to try a role play with me?" We encourage you to try role-plays if you feel confident about how to lead and participate in them; otherwise, stay with empathy.
4. If the group is reticent to make guesses, you might initiate the empathy with two or three guesses, then consciously leave space for others to join the process. You can also explicitly request others to join in from the beginning so a pattern is not set where the group expects you to offer most of the empathy. However, the focus is still primarily on the person receiving, so if people are reluctant and the person receiving is struggling to stay connected without more active connection, step in to offer more connection.
5. If the person receiving empathy touches on deeper self-connection (including crying) and others in the group continue to make guesses, this sometimes shifts the person out of self-connection. If this happens, gently offer a sign or gesture that indicates "not now," such as holding up a hand, or verbally express your feelings, needs and request to hold back on verbal empathy but stay in non-verbal empathy. You might check in with the person you interrupted after the empathy time ends to see how the interruption affected him or her and connect about both your needs.
6. At all times, be prepared to be authentic about your experience and to dialogue with people in real time about needs met and unmet. It is not uncommon for empathy groups to experience some challenge around how to connect and meet everyone's needs. If you can model and practice your "living NVC" skills, you are most likely to find the experience nourishing and growthful.
7. If you're struggling with leading, you can ask group members for empathy. If you're still struggling, you can also ask an assistant for support, and bring your challenges to the empathy group leaders' meeting.

## Empathy Groups: A guide to holding your self-led empathy groups

We hope this guide will contribute to your group's ability to meet group members' needs.

The key needs empathy groups are designed to meet are empathy and connection. They are NOT designed to meet needs for practice, though practice may of course occur. Therefore, during an empathy group, everyone's focus is on connecting with one individual at a time through giving that person empathy.

We're defining empathy as a quality of connection wherein we are in touch with what's going on with someone this very moment in their heart-of-hearts, or what we refer to in NVC as their needs - life-energy moving through a person towards fulfillment. We also use the word empathy to refer to the actions we are taking as we move towards that quality of connection. For example, if I'm wanting to empathize with someone, one action might be that I focus my attention on trying to sense, feel, understand, see, get in touch with, connect with the person's feelings and needs. I might do this verbally or non-verbally, just with the focus of my attention. We believe that non-verbal empathy can be just as (or sometimes more) powerful an action as verbal empathy.

When someone is receiving empathy during an Empathy Group, sometimes the connection is found most easily if that person is receiving verbal empathy from just one person; other times deep connection occurs when the whole group participates in giving verbal empathy. To support the process, we encourage those not actively speaking at any given time to continue to actively participate through giving non-verbal empathy by focusing your attention on connecting with the speaker's feelings and needs.

To facilitate the flow of empathy, we request that all group members refrain from giving advice or discussing a person's "issue" unless 1) advice or discussion was explicitly requested, AND 2) group members have connected with the needs underlying the request and with how this will contribute to the person. We request that you check these two questions carefully because we believe very strongly that empathy can be very powerful and healing, and, since most of us have had very few, if any, role models of giving, witnessing or receiving empathy, we want to hold with care the possibility for this to happen for each group member at this retreat. While advice, discussion and sharing one's own experience can often be helpful, we have many more opportunities in life to give and receive these - so we want to hold these Empathy Groups with a strong intention to support the rare and precious experience of receiving empathy.

We encourage you to follow the classical NVC format for giving empathy, especially if you are fairly new to NVC and are still practicing basic skills. However, we recognize that forging a connection is always more important than the format of the empathy.

Reminder: the NVC form for empathy includes guessing feelings and needs and may sound something like this: **Are you feeling ...? Because you need ...?**

If you are already familiar and comfortable with connecting through NVC empathy, you may want to explore how to "naturalize" the phrasing to meet more needs for connection. For example, you can review our handout of alternative ways of framing needs (e.g. "it's really important to you that..."), break the sentence into guessing feelings and needs separately (e.g. "So you're feeling really lonely? Are you needing companionship?"), use 5-word needs instead of one-word needs (e.g. "Are you needing trust that your needs matter" rather than "Are you needing trust"), and the like. (Feel free to consult your feelings and needs lists.)

Staying with these simple guidelines is so different from our accustomed ways of speaking and thinking that it may be very hard or uncomfortable to do. Our experience is that there are many layers of depth to be discovered through this very simple tool if we stick with it longer than we could before. While you are here we hope you'll receive a quality of support for doing so that is not usually found outside of this environment, and we encourage you to use your time at this retreat to do as much "empathy muscle-building" as you find in yourself to do.

In thinking about how to divide time in your group, you may want to consider either dividing time equally each time your group meets, or focusing more attention on one person per meeting. If you choose the latter, we suggest that you still give each person at least a few minutes to check in with what's alive for them, then proceed with focusing on one person for the remainder of the time. We suggest this because we have confidence it will meet needs for trust, connection and belonging for all group members. However, we also trust that your group can find its way to meeting those needs.

We hope your empathy groups meet your needs!

## What Is NVC Parenting?

### Attending to Everyone's Needs

NVC Parenting is grounded in a commitment to understanding and attending to everyone's needs, particularly for compassion, connection, and choice. NVC Parenting aims to equip parents with skills to listen to their own hearts and to their children's hearts, to experience compassion both toward their children and toward themselves, and to increasingly find strategies for daily living that meet everyone's needs more. NVC Parenting hopes to support parents in raising a generation of children who themselves have models for living peacefully and compassionately, and who have the skills and paradigms necessary in order to contribute to a peaceful society.

### Sharing Power - A Partnership Model

NVC Parenting aims to move away from strategies that use adults' power over children and toward strategies that address both sides' needs with compassion and equality. The strategies NVC Parenting reaches for recognize children's innate wisdom about themselves and their needs for power and autonomy, as well as their needs for contribution and care for others.

Thus, while parents have tremendously greater life experience and access to resources, and they would want to bring these to bear in their parenting, NVC Parenting encourages parents to reduce the amount of power they use over their children and increase their use of power with their children. Power over means that one person uses his or her greater physical, emotional, intellectual, or social/legal power to effect the results he or she wants, and that decisions or actions are not consensual.

1. Parents have emotional power over their children because of children's dependency upon their parents for meeting their basic physical and emotional needs.
2. Parents have intellectual power over their children because, developmentally, they are likely to have greater mental and verbal capacity to comprehend the world around them and express themselves in ways that are more likely to meet their needs.
3. Parents have social and legal power over their children because they have much greater access to resources (such as money, information, connection with people in positions of power in our society) and legal guardianship of the child such that the child doesn't have autonomous decision-making power on matters directly affecting him or her.

Power with means that both people's needs are held equally and both people participate in making decisions that affect them. Each person may be committed to meeting his or her own needs, but as much as they are able, they try to find strategies that are not at the expense of another person's needs.

### NVC Parenting in the Real World

All these are aims. We recognize that our cultural conditioning (the way we are trained to think, communicate and meet our own needs), our individual life histories, and most of our social circumstances model and support a power-over parenting paradigm. Therefore, power-with strategies are often mixed with power-over strategies in real-life families that are trying to live NVC. Thus, even if a parent is committed to making decisions in partnership, safety and security needs, and sometimes ease and peace often over-ride all other needs because the parents alone are caring for their children. Parents who are learning NVC and trying to live it with their families face the challenge of how to embody principles that our society is not set-up to support.

Partnership parenting is enhanced and can be practiced more easily when additional resources are available to both parents and children so that they have options for meeting their needs that are not dependent on one another. Thus, in order to find ways to live NVC in practical, daily life, adults may want to consider either building community around their families to increase resources, or focusing on empathy and self-acceptance for the ways in which their ideals of how they want to parent could not be manifested to their satisfaction in their current circumstances.

Fundamentally, NVC doesn't rely on one's ability to always "use NVC" in order to "succeed." Putting one's attention on mourning for needs not met keeps one's attention on one's feelings and needs and is therefore consistent with and is part of living NVC. The gap between "ideal NVC" and "real-world, practical NVC" is important to acknowledge in order to contribute to meeting parents' needs for self-acceptance, hope, and shared reality. We mourn the ways in which our ability to meet everyone's needs falls short of our desire to meet everyone's needs.

### **Daily Life with NVC: What We Aim For**

1. Deepening our relationship with ourselves, growing our capacity for self acceptance, self empathy, and the ability to attend to our own needs; holding ourselves with compassion, especially for the places in which we fall short of living in line with our values.
2. Resolving conflicts by sharing a commitment to attending to everyone's needs.
3. Communicating while having intense emotions, being able to take full responsibility for our feelings.
4. Focusing on our hearts - hearing other's needs irrespective of how those needs are expressed, so we can keep our hearts open to every person's humanity.
5. Transforming anger by clearly identifying both our judgments and our unmet needs and empathizing with others' needs; seeing others' anger as an invitation to gain clarity about their unmet needs.
6. Communicating authentically and honestly.
7. Making agreements based on trust that they will meet needs, and re-assessing agreements to ensure they are indeed meeting needs.
8. Sharing celebrations - the ways in which our needs are met in relation to others or ourselves.
9. Mourning the ways in which we have not lived in line with our values or see how our actions have contributed to needs unmet for others.
10. Sharing power

### **Some of NVC's Unique Contributions**

1. Non-judgmental approach that fosters self-acceptance and acceptance of others.
2. Has deep roots in spiritual and social change traditions yet is highly practical and relevant to everyday situations. (NVC draws from nonviolent principles as articulated and practiced by Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Additionally, people from many spiritual traditions have expressed that they see NVC as an avenue for practicing the spiritual principles of their traditions.)
3. Comprehensive and can be used in all arenas of life, not just parenting.
4. Offers the radical change that is needed for transforming existing paradigms instead of making superficial changes.
5. Equally committed to the needs of children and parents, instead of prioritizing one over the other.
6. Recognizes the social context of parenting and encourages community building, not just individual skill-building.
7. Aligned with parenting strategies for infancy that encourage early attachment and bonding, and extends them beyond infancy.



# NVC as an Approach to Parenting

By Inbal Kashtan, BayNVC

## 1. Compassion, Connection, Partnership

The decision to parent with NVC is grounded in a commitment to nurturing trust and connection within the parent-child relationship. With NVC, parents can experience compassion both toward their children and toward themselves, express themselves with power and care, find strategies for daily living that are more likely to meet everyone's needs, and increase trust that everyone's needs matter, even when we do not find strategies to meet everyone's needs.

By transforming parenting, parents can participate in raising a generation of children who have models for living peacefully and compassionately, and who have the skills and consciousness needed to contribute to a peaceful society.

NVC offers three different areas of focus for parents as they shift their orientation to parenting:

- a. Compassion - meeting challenges with compassion for oneself and for the child in place of judgments and demands (or punitive energy); understanding the needs underlying behavior
- b. Connection and trust - focusing on quality of connection in family relationships and building trust that everyone's needs matter; enhancing security and attachment
- c. Living in a partnership paradigm - shifting fully from power-over to sharing power in families; turning power struggles into dilemmas

This document focuses primarily on the third area and explores what it means for families to integrate a partnership paradigm. However, the focus on compassion, connection and trust is essential for autonomy and interdependence to flourish.

## 2. Power, Power-Over, Power-With

We define power as the capacity to mobilize resources to meet our needs. Resources - strategies, ideas, things, or anything that can be used to meet needs - can be both external and internal. External resources include such things as money, social sanction for our decision-making power (e.g. laws and customs), connections, information, education, physical strength, etc. Internal resources refer specifically to things that are completely independent of our personal or social situation, such as our levels of self-connection, access to compassion, awareness of choice, capacity to make choices that meet our own and others' needs, stories and belief systems we have about life, our temperament, etc.

All human beings have a need for power, yet adults have tremendously greater life experience and access to resources than children. Because of our sense of great responsibility for contributing to the safety and well-being of their children, we tend to want to use this greater access to resources over our children instead of with our children.

Power over means that one person uses his or her greater physical, emotional, intellectual, or social/legal power to try to create the results he or she wants, and that decisions or actions are

not consensual. Power with means that both people's needs are held equally and both people participate in making decisions that affect them. Each person may be committed to meeting his or her own needs, but as much as they are able, they try to find strategies that also address the other person's needs.

In parenting with NVC, we aim to move away from strategies that use adults' power over children, such as consequences and rewards, and toward strategies grounded in addressing both sides' needs with compassion and equal care. We recognize children's innate wisdom about themselves, their needs for power and autonomy, and their needs for contribution and care for others. All these inform a movement toward partnership in meeting life's challenges.

What does sharing power mean in family relationships? The two primary modes of parenting in our society have commonly been referred to as authoritarian (or coercive) and permissive. Authoritarian parenting may be focused on the parents' authority over their children, in which the parents' needs take priority (including their need to contribute to their children) over the children's needs (including autonomy). Parenting from this perspective can take many forms, from a high degree of disregard for children's participation in decisions that affect them, to more engagement in dialogue while maintaining the power to punish and reward. Permissive parenting is generally seen as a relinquishing of the parents' needs and focus entirely on what children want and wish for.

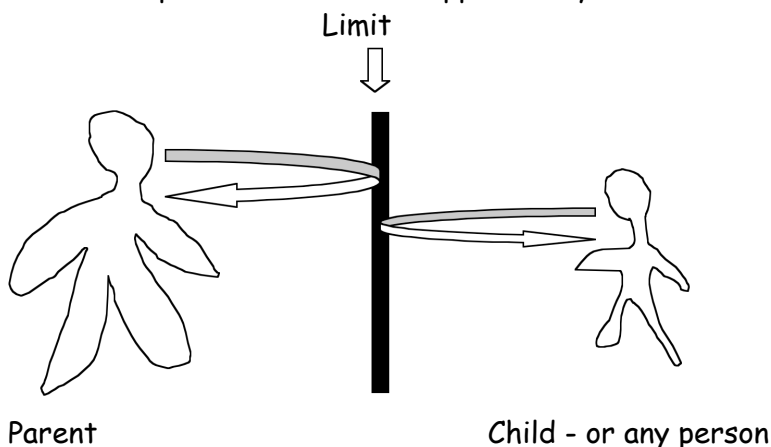
NVC offers a distinctly different approach focused on developing a partnership centered on care for everyone's needs. It falls outside the permissive/coercive paradigms because it focuses on everyone needs, without relinquishing either parent or child.

### 3. Parents' Needs and Authentic Limits

A central concern about permissiveness in relation to children is the idea that "children need limits." It is likely that most parents in the U.S. have heard this statement. From an NVC perspective, "limits" or "boundaries" are strategies, not needs. However, they are clearly very powerful strategies or they would not be raised with such frequency and passion.

Limits can be a powerful strategy for meeting many different needs. Chief among them is safety, but many human needs can be supported by some kind of boundary.

The following diagram illustrates how self-connection contributes to full authentic dialogue. In this model parents needs are supported by some kind of boundary.



Limits as seen here tend to:

- a. Be outside ourselves - external limits
- b. Be set by one person (parent or other person in position of power) without the agreement of the other person (usually the child)
- c. Seem logical to the person setting the limit, but arbitrary or unjust to the other person (the logic and injustice are both interpretations).

External limits, like all strategies, are intended to meet needs, and may in fact meet some of those intended needs. However, those needs are met at high cost, including:

- a. Power struggles over different strategies
- b. Frustration, resentment, anger and pain, with each person left to his or her own resources
- c. External motivation for behavior (rewards and consequences) instead of intrinsic motivation (connection with needs) and trust in oneself
- d. Breaks in trust and relationship

When we recognize that external limits (and the power-over involved in enforcing them) are not the most effective strategies to meet needs, we can begin to shift our focus from enforcement to understanding needs. Focusing on our own needs supports us in understanding our internal, authentic limits: the limits of our own needs. When we are deeply rooted in care for our needs, we will recognize when we want to hold our needs strongly and communicate them to others. This is a form of "setting limits" that has an internal reference instead of an external reference: ourselves, instead of cultural norms or agreements.

Here are a few examples of common external boundaries and the internal needs that may be behind them:

External limit	Possible internal needs (among others)
Bedtime is at 8pm	Rest, connection with oneself or one's partner, contribution to the family (in the form of household tasks), contribution to the child's well being
Homework before play	Contribution to learning and growth, peace of mind, acceptance for oneself and one's child
You have to brush your teeth	Contribution to health and well being, peace of mind
You have to say "please," "thank you," "sorry"	Connection, mattering, care for others, acceptance in society (for oneself and one's child)

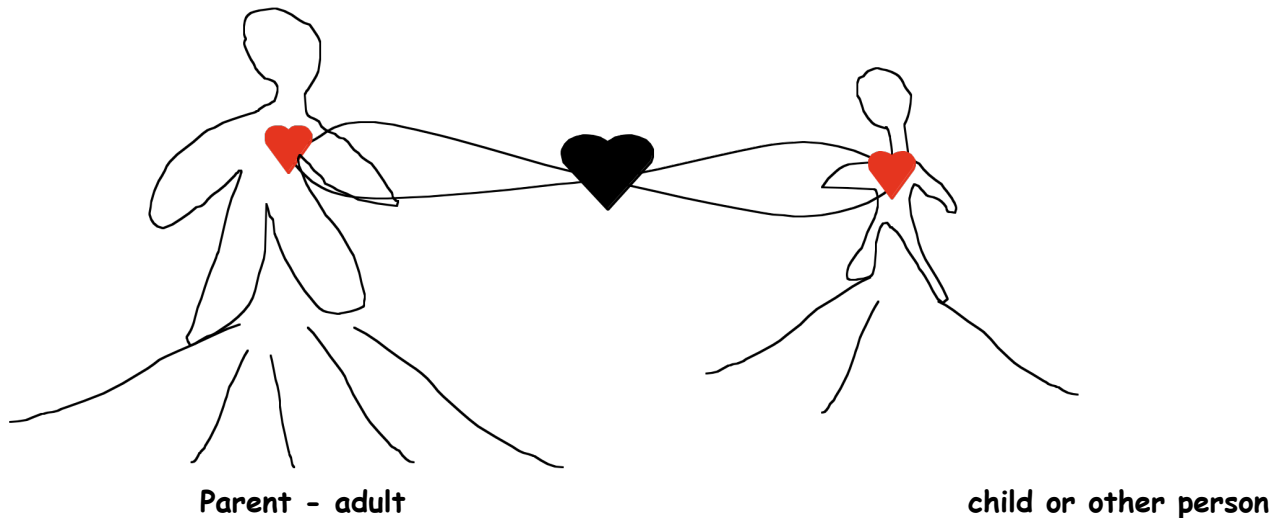
Unilateral, enforced agreements that arise from a power-over paradigm are likely to breed anger and resentment. Alternatively, if we make agreements through the process of surfacing the needs involved and looking for strategies that work for everyone, we create partnership in facing life's dilemma's. Such agreements about bedtime, homework, brushing teeth, etc., will be re-evaluated if they end up not meeting the needs hoped for. (With very young children, the process of holding everyone's needs would take place within the parent with less involvement from the child; as the child grows, so will her or his ability to participate fully in such a process.)

For NVC to fully contribute to family life, parents need to be deeply grounded in their own needs, not only in their compassion and empathy for their children. We also need to recognize the difference between needs and strategies, so we don't come to think that caring for our children's

needs means doing anything they "feel like" doing. Connection with needs thus serves parents both in caring for themselves and in contributing to their children's deeper needs.

The following diagram illustrates how self-connection contributes to full, authentic dialogue. In this model, parents' needs become their authentic, internal limits.

### INTERNAL / AUTHENTIC LIMITS = NEEDS



When we take time to fully connect with our needs and with the other person's needs, we have the opportunity to:

- a. Nurture ourselves by caring for and attending to our needs
- b. Meet our own need for mattering, instead of seeking obedience as a strategy to prove that we matter
- c. Open to hearing the other person's needs, knowing that they matter as well
- d. Enter into dialogue that is focused on quality of relationship instead of on one outcome
- e. Experience flexibility in which needs we want to attend to, recognizing both the spectrum of self-care needs as well as the spectrum of interdependent needs
- f. Exercise full, authentic choice about how to respond to a situation instead of falling back on habitual reactions that don't serve us
- g. Contribute to intrinsic motivation for behavior both for ourselves and for the other person
- h. Move from conflict with another person to a dilemma we hold together
- i. Nurture the quality of trust and relationship we want with the other person
- j. Model and contribute to peace.

As we get more deeply connected to our own needs, we are likely to find that our needs for care, consideration and compassion for our children weigh as strongly as our needs for self-care, autonomy and consideration for ourselves. This internal balance, where we can be more connected to a fuller range of our needs and intentions, give us greater flexibility to recognize, understand and attend to our children's needs without resentment, anger or shame.

#### 4. Protective, Punitive and Utilitarian/Unilateral Force

The NVC approach to parenting recognizes that, in various situations, parents may choose to use their power over their children. NVC encourages parents to use only protective force rather than punitive force. Protective force implies the intention to protect: using the minimum force necessary to maintain safety, for the minimum amount of time, with a return to dialogue as soon as possible. Punitive force, on the other hand, implies the intention to punish or educate.

As parents transition from the acculturation to use punitive force with children to using protective force, most find themselves using force that is neither punitive nor solely protective. The term unilateral or utilitarian force might describe this use of force: essentially, we use the power we have over our children to move toward the outcome we want because we do not perceive other strategies that can meet our needs. We make unilateral decisions, utilizing our greater power. For example, we may set bedtime routines or going to school routines and handle daily conflicts around them with rewards and consequences because we simply don't recognize other options for how to meet everyone's needs. Our intention is not punitive; our intention is to survive and manage daily life. Recognizing that this type of force is not truly protective is a first step to taking responsibility for our choice to use power over children. Over time, we can assess and choose again whether or not we want to continue to use this power, or if we are ready to move toward a full partnership model.

With NVC, we aim to grow in self-acceptance for where we are now, even while learning and growing toward a partnership model.

#### 5. Facing Our Triggers

While we may long to embody the principles of NVC fully all the time, it is likely that we will still get triggered and still react habitually when we are triggered. Brain research suggests that, when we are triggered, we do not experience conscious choice about our actions. To a great degree, our brains switch to automatic protective responses that are not open to flexible reflective behavior. Sometimes we recognize that we are triggered; other times we are unable to tolerate certain emotions or behaviors from our children, partner, or others in our lives, and we are not necessarily even conscious of the trigger. Yet a triggered response is the main reason we find ourselves engaged in behaviors that do not meet our needs, without experiencing a capacity to make different choices.

This understanding does not suggest that we relinquish responsibility for our actions. Rather, it can lead us to recognize the importance of attending to our own healing and growth so we can, over time, experience greater and greater choice about our responses in triggering situations.

NVC offers support for working with our triggers in several ways:

- a. Transforming shame - When we react in ways that are out of step with our values, we often feel guilt or shame. These feelings are rooted in self-judgments and self-demands. With NVC we can work to transform self-judgments and self-demands, building a foundation of compassion for ourselves which then serves as the springboard to growth.

- b. Increasing flexibility of our responses - When we become aware that we are being triggered by certain behaviors, emotions, or topics, we can use NVC to look more closely at these triggers with curiosity and an open heart. The use of journaling, empathy, self-empathy, and role plays while focusing on the thoughts, emotions, needs, and physical sensations that arise around the trigger can lead to greater insight and integration of brain functions. This integration then enables a more flexible and adaptive response to all our interactions, not just the triggering ones.
- c. Transforming blame - Part of our reaction to others also involves blame, which can block self-awareness and self-responsibility. Transforming judgments of others and taking responsibility for our feelings re-focus us on working with ourselves. This transformation may occur in the moment through empathic connection, or through reflection and empathy away from the triggering situation.
- d. Reconciliation - When we can take full responsibility for our actions without shame or blame, we are more likely to be able to return to our children after we have acted out of line with our values for the work of repairing trust and rebuilding connection. NVC offers a process for reconciliation that can contribute greatly to fostering trusting relationships.
- e. Deep healing - Some people need more focus on healing before integrating new habits, and NVC can often offer that through a process of deep empathy.
- f. Focus on self-connection when triggered - In the moment of being triggered, NVC can support us to recognize that we are triggered and to focus on returning to self-connection and choice. Focusing on self-empathy, including connecting with our bodies and our breathing, can create a pathway for grounding ourselves in the present moment and recognizing our essential safety. Being grounded in the present supports our ability to take fuller responsibility and respond from and to the present instead of reacting to and from the past.
- g. Developing new responses - Concurrent with focusing on building a foundation of connection within ourselves, we can also practice alternative responses to situations that trigger us. Using NVC's three options (self-connection, empathy, self-expression) in practice situations helps us integrate them as possibilities in real-life situations. Ways to integrate these options include journaling, empathy, self-empathy and role plays. However, it is important to recognize that using the words or formula of NVC without a concurrent emotional presence is not likely to be sufficient for trust and connection to build. This is why NVC ultimately focuses on a shift in consciousness and presence instead of on language alone.
- h. Living NVC in the moment - When we are more able to sustain self-connection through triggering situations, we can fully engage with others with presence, compassion and authenticity. These skills can develop into new habits over time, though our access to them is likely to vary depending on how triggered we are, how much we have already attended to our healing and growth, and how much we have integrated NVC into our accessible responses.

## 6. NVC Parenting in the Current Context

We recognize that our cultural conditioning (the way we are trained to think, communicate and meet our own needs), our individual life histories, and most of our social circumstances model and support a power-over parenting paradigm. Therefore, power-with strategies are often mixed with

power-over strategies in real-life families that are trying to live NVC. Even if a parent is committed to making decisions in partnership, safety and security needs, and sometimes ease and peace may over-ride all other needs because the parents alone are caring for their children. Parents who are learning NVC and trying to live it with their families face the challenge of how to embody principles that our society is not set up to support.

A partnership parenting paradigm is enhanced and can be practiced more easily when additional resources are available to both parents and children so that they have a wider variety of options for meeting their needs, rather than relying solely on each other. Thus, in order to find ways to live NVC in practical, daily life, adults may want to consider either building community around their families to increase resources for themselves and their children, or focusing on empathy and self-acceptance for the ways in which their ideals of how they want to parent have not been manifested to their satisfaction in their current circumstances.

Fundamentally, NVC doesn't rely on our ability to always "use NVC" in order to "succeed." Putting our attention on mourning for needs not met keeps our attention on our feelings and needs and is therefore consistent with and is part of living NVC. The gap between "ideal NVC" and "real-world, practical NVC" is important to acknowledge in order to contribute to meeting parents' needs for self-acceptance, hope, and staying present with the challenges of daily life. We mourn the ways in which our ability to meet everyone's needs falls short of our desire to meet everyone's needs.

## 7. Living NVC in Daily Life: What We Aim For

- a. Deepening our self-connection and relationship with ourselves; growing our capacity for self acceptance, self empathy, and the ability to attend to our own needs; holding ourselves with compassion, especially for the places in which we fall short of living in line with our values. This is the foundation.
- b. Focusing on our hearts - hearing other's needs irrespective of how those needs are expressed, so we can keep our hearts open to every person's humanity.
- c. Communicating authentically and honestly.
- d. Taking full responsibility for our feelings, including at our greatest intensity.
- e. Resolving conflicts by sharing a commitment to attending to everyone's needs.
- f. Taking responsibility for our actions: Recognizing our full choice in response to our own and others' intense emotions and in relation to choosing to live NVC.
- g. Making agreements based on trust that they will meet needs, and re-assessing agreements to ensure that they are indeed meeting needs.
- h. Sharing celebrations - the ways in which our needs are met in relation to others or ourselves.
- i. Mourning together the inevitable moments when we will not be able to find a way to meet everyone's needs, even when we really would like to and are open to that.
- j. Mourning the ways in which we have not lived in line with our values or see how our actions have contributed to needs unmet for others.
- k. Sharing power.

## 8. Some of NVC's Unique Contributions

- a. Non-judgmental approach that fosters self-acceptance and acceptance of others.
- b. Has deep roots in spiritual and social change traditions yet is highly practical and relevant to everyday situations. (NVC draws from nonviolent principles as articulated and practiced by Gandhi and Martin Luther King. Additionally, people from many spiritual traditions have expressed that they see NVC as an avenue for practicing the spiritual principles of their traditions.)
- c. Comprehensive and can be used in all arenas of life, not just parenting.
- d. Highly flexible and can be adapted to a variety of cultural contexts, in part by focusing on different aspects of NVC consciousness: compassion, connection, empowerment, acceptance, etc.
- e. Offers the radical change that is needed for transforming existing paradigms instead of making superficial changes.
- f. Equally committed to the needs of children and parents, instead of prioritizing one over the other.
- g. Recognizes the social context of parenting and encourages community building, not just individual skill-building.
- h. Aligned with parenting strategies for infancy that encourage early attachment and bonding, and extends them beyond infancy.

**The following section is Inbal's Revised Basics and Workbook:**



# Hopes and Challenges

What do you celebrate about your parenting? What needs of yours are you meeting in the way you parent?

1. What brings you to this camp? What are you hoping or yearning for?
2. What are key areas of challenge in your parenting? Where are you not meeting your needs as a parent?
3. How does NVC support you in parenting?
4. Are there specific challenges your facing about integrating NVC into your family life?
5. What are topics or activities do you particularly hope we engage with at this family camp?

# Hearing "NO"

## KEYS:

- a. "No" can be seen as an invitation to further dialogue. Being able to hear a "no" and still dialogue about both sides' needs without enforcing our agenda is key to building a trusting relationship.
  - b. We can continue to dialogue by connecting with what needs are being met by saying "no." Another way to think about this: What needs am I saying "yes" to when I say "no" to something else?
  - c. Example: If a child says "no" to a parent's request to go to bed, they might be saying "yes" to meeting their need for autonomy, trust that their needs matter to the parent, connection, safety, play, or others. Connecting with these needs and empathizing with them can open the door to mutual understanding and further dialogue.
  - d. We can reach a mutual "yes" through a commitment to meeting everyone's needs: not just ours, not just others'. When our children trust this commitment, they will be more open to considering our needs.
1. Think of a "NO" that you are having a hard time hearing from your child and write down the situation.
  
  2. What are your feelings and needs when you hear or think about the "NO?" (self-empathy)
  
  3. Think of the person who is saying the "NO." What may be that person's feelings and needs? Or, what is the person saying "yes" to? What needs is she or he trying to meet? (empathy)
  
  4. In writing or in dyads, use NVC in the following dialogue format:
 

**You:** Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because your need for \_\_\_\_\_ is unmet?

**Child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**You (empathy):** Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

**Child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**You (expression):** I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because I need \_\_\_\_\_.

Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?

**Child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**You (choose expression or empathy):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**You (choose expression or empathy):** \_\_\_\_\_

## Saying "NO" in NVC

### KEYS:

- a. "NO" can be expressed in NVC in three steps: 1) Connect with the need of the other person that is expressed in their request; 2) Connect with your need that is preventing you from saying "YES" to the request; 3) Come up with a request that's designed to help meet both your needs and the needs of the other person.
- b. We can reach a mutual "YES" through a commitment to meeting everyone's needs: not just ours, not just others'. When others in our life trust this commitment, they will be more open to considering our needs.
  - a. Think of a request from your child that you're having a hard time saying "no" to. What is the request?
  - b. What needs of the child are being expressed in the request? (Empathy)
  - c. What are you saying "YES" to by saying "NO" in this particular situation? (Self-empathy. What needs are you trying to meet? What's preventing you from saying "YES" to your child's request?)
  - d. What would you like to request at this point that might contribute to both your needs being met?
  - e. What might you like to tell your child using NVC? Consider your observations, feelings, needs and requests and use the following format for the dialogue.

**You (expression):** I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because I need \_\_\_\_\_.

Would you be willing to \_\_\_\_\_?

**Your child:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**You (empathy):** Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

**Your child:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**You (empathy):** Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

**Your child:** \_\_\_\_\_.

**You (choose expression or empathy):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

# Requests of Self and Others

## Requests of Yourself:

- a. Identify a need you have that is not met to your satisfaction.
- b. Write down a doable request you can make of yourself that will move you forward toward meeting this need.
- c. What might make it hard for you to fulfill this request?
- d. What needs would you be saying "yes" to by saying "no" to this request (if not covered in #3 above)?
- e. Holding both the original needs you're trying to meet and the needs that may make it hard for you to meet the original needs, can you imagine another request of yourself that you might make that you are more likely to follow through on?

## Requests of People Close to You:

- a. What support can you envision from others that would help you follow through on your request to yourself?
- b. Who would you like to request this support from?
- c. What doable request can you make of this person or people?

Set up role play with another person in your group around this request. Decide if you'd like that person to play the role with giraffe or jackal ears. Work with any "no" to connect with everyone's needs.

## Working with Anger with NVC - Keys

- a. The stimulus for our anger is what happened that we are reacting to.
- b. Our thoughts and judgments, however, are the cause of our anger. Noticing the judgments can help us see where we are blaming others for our feelings instead of taking responsibility for them. Thoughts that often lead to anger include "should," "right/wrong," "fault," "deserve," etc.
- c. Anger can alert us to the fact that needs of ours are not met - this is what we refer to as the root of our anger. We can use anger as a "red flag" to wake us up into consciousness of our needs.
- d. Fully connecting with the deeper needs underlying the anger can enable us to transform the anger (rather than suppressing or unleashing it) and to experience release without requiring the other person to change - we hold the power over our own feelings.
- e. NVC is not about "being nice" or avoiding emotional intensity. We can express ourselves fully and with intensity while still taking responsibility for our feelings by expressing the depth of our feelings and needs instead of remaining at the level of judgments, and by making doable requests about what we would like.
- f. We can also reach for an understanding of the other person's experience, the feelings and needs underlying the actions or words that were the stimulus of our anger. This enables us to re-establish connection with our own and the other person's humanity. Sometimes this step alone releases any anger and blame.

The purpose of the following worksheet is to become acquainted with our inner world when we are angry and develop skills for working with anger that don't have to involve change on the other person's part (another worksheet addresses dialogue with another person).

# Anger Journal

- a. Think of something that you are angry about in relation to your child and write down the situation. (Stimulus for the anger.)
  
- b. What thoughts or judgments are you having about the person in this situation? (Cause of anger.)
  
- c. What needs of yours are not being met? (Root of anger, beginning of self-empathy.)
  
- d. When you focus your attention on those needs, what other feelings come up? (Continuing self-empathy and noticing complexity of emotions underneath anger.)
  
- e. Now write down what you could say to this person using your observations, feelings, needs and requests. (NVC self-expression - taking responsibility for our feelings by naming the needs rather than the other person's behavior as their source.)
  
- f. Imagine what this person might say in response to what you just said and write it down.
  
- g. Imagine what feelings and needs this person is expressing through whatever they are saying or doing, and write down an empathy guess that you might say to them. (Empathy that enables us to open our hearts to the other person.)
  
- h. If you want, continue the dialogue on another sheet of paper (or practice with a partner), continuing to alternate between self-empathy when needed, full expression of your feelings, needs and requests, and empathy for the other person.
  
- i. Notice how you are feeling at this moment. Are you still angry? If so, repeat this process starting at step 2.

## Working with "No" to Deepen Self-Connection

### KEYS:

- a. Understanding the difference between needs and strategies is key to our ability to stay in dialogue and face a "no" while connecting with our own and others' needs.
- b. While we want to move toward meeting our needs, we may want to simultaneously work on our attachment to having our needs met and on releasing the idea that our needs "have to" be met.

Think of a charged situation in which you don't have a lot of confidence that you will get your needs met, and you are having a hard time hearing a "no" to your request. Write down the situation and request, then explore your response to the "no" by responding to the following questions.

- c. The situation:
  
- d. My feelings, needs and request:
  
- e. How am I feeling about hearing "no" and what is my need in relation to the "no"?
  
- f. What is my understanding of the other person's feelings and needs? What needs might they be saying "yes" to that are leading them to say "no" to my request?
  
- g. Can I imagine other strategies for meeting my needs other than this person agreeing to my request?
  
- h. If I imagine that the person would not shift, how do I feel and what needs of mine come to life?
  
- i. If I imagine not getting my original needs met in this situation, how do I feel and what are my needs?
  
- j. What needs of mine might be met if I shift and completely let go of my request?
  
- k. What is alive in me right now (my feelings and needs)?

## Working with "Yes" Toward Joyful Giving

Think of a situation in which you got a "yes" to your request but you are not confident that it was agreed to freely or joyfully. Write down the situation and request, then explore your response to the "yes" by responding to the following questions.

The situation:

My feelings, needs and request:

- a. How am I feeling about hearing "yes" and what is my need?
- b. Is there anything concrete that is leading me to consider that their "yes" may not be given joyfully?
- c. What is my understanding of the other person's feelings and needs?
- d. What needs might they be saying "no" to by saying "yes" to my request?
- e. What needs might they be saying "yes" to that are leading them to say "yes" to my request?
- f. When I imagine that the other person's needs would not be met, how do I feel and what are my needs?
- g. How am I feeling and what is my need in relation to my original request?
- h. Can I imagine other strategies for meeting my needs other than this person agreeing to my request?
- i. How do I feel and what needs come to life for me when I imagine that the person would say "no"?
- j. How do I feel and what are my needs when I imagine not getting my original needs met in this situation?
- k. What is alive in me right now (my feelings and needs)?



## Mourning and Healing - Keys

### Internal Work:

- a. NVC invites us to shift our relationship to things we regret from one of guilt, self-recrimination and the like to mourning and understanding.
- b. Self-recrimination and guilt arise out of self-judgments. The key to transforming self-judgments is to recognize the needs underneath our self-judgments - the needs that weren't met by our own behavior.
- c. Mourning in NVC involves recognizing the needs that weren't met by our behavior and taking time to mourn how our needs (including our need for contribution to others) were not met.
- d. After we mourn our past actions, we can also make space for self-compassion (self-acceptance, self-understanding). This process involved understanding the needs we were trying to meet by our behavior. This is not the same as condoning or agreeing with our behavior - it's a matter of shifting our relationship to our actions such that we meet ourselves compassionately, knowing that we did the best we could to meet needs, however tragically.
- e. When we explore needs in relation to a past action, it's important to give ourselves the time to explore our feelings and integrate what we learn. Healing emerges out of the growing self-connection, self-compassion and self-trust that this process enables.

### Relational Work:

We can use NVC to heal rifts in trust and pain between us and others. The following notes relate to situations where we're mourning our own actions, rather than when we want to express our pain about others' actions. This work can be done in person with the other person, or as a role play.

- a. Empathy for the present pain in the other person, opening our heart to them without defensiveness. Until the person is complete and expresses a desire to hear how you feel about what they shared.
- b. Expression of our own mourning, sharing what needs of ours were not met by the actions we took. Check how the person feels when you're done, and see if they are interested in and ready to hear the next step.
- c. Contributing to understanding. Some of the pain most people experience when others' actions don't meet their needs has to do with bewilderment about how someone could act that way. There is a deep need for understanding and reopening our hearts to others' humanity even when they have acted in ways that were painful for us. This step is intended to meet this need for understanding. Share your understanding of the feelings and needs that led you to take the actions that were painful for the other person. Focus on contributing to the other person, not on wanting to justify or even receive their understanding or forgiveness. You are still focused on the other person even though you are sharing your own pain.

# Mourning and Self-Compassion Journal

1. Think of something you've done that you feel regret about. Write down what it is in observations (without judgments).
2. What are judgments you have of yourself in relation to what you've done? Write them down, as much as possible without editing.

## **Mourning:**

3. How do you feel in relation to what you did? Notice and note both emotions and physical sensations in your body.
4. What needs of yours were not met?
5. Take a moment to breathe and check in with yourself. Do you notice more judgments? If yes, write them down.
6. Again, identify feelings and needs behind these judgments. Pause each time you identify a feeling or a need to experience it as much as possible.

## **Self-Compassion:**

7. Now shift your attention to the needs you were trying to meet when you did the thing you've regretted. Write them down and spend time connecting with them.
8. How do you feel as you notice the needs you were trying to meet? Again, connect as much as you can with both emotions and physical sensations.
9. Take a moment to breathe and check in with yourself again. How are you feeling now? What needs are met or not met in this moment?
10. Do you have any requests of yourself at this moment that may support you in meeting your needs?

## Moment of Choice - Keys

1. One aspect of NVC is that it can be seen/used/lived as a spiritual practice. A basic part of NVC as a spiritual practice is recognizing our choice.
2. NVC is a strategy, not a need. It's one choice among many options for how to respond to life.
3. There are three "developmental stages" (not in any particular order) that most people wrestle with in using NVC:
  - a. Recognizing that they have choice to use NVC ("the moment of choice"),
  - b. Having the skills to make an NVC choice, and
  - c. Making the choice.
4. Each has its own challenges. Different people find different stages more or less challenging.
5. In practicing and living NVC, it's sometimes hard to remember NVC as a choice. Yet most of us come to a point when we integrate NVC consciousness sufficiently to recognize NVC as an option at a given moment of challenge.
6. When we recognize the option, we have a choice of whether or not to use it. It remains a choice, rather than a new "should" or "have to" or "right thing to do."
7. If we choose not to use NVC, we can still choose to use NVC to empathize with ourselves and meet ourselves with compassion, and to be at peace about the choice we make.
8. If we come to view NVC as a new "right" or "should," we may find that our needs for autonomy or authenticity or other needs may not met. It's important therefore to keep reminding ourselves that it is a choice.
9. We may want to note whether there are patterns in our behavior - situations or specific challenges in relation to which we find it difficult to choose to use NVC. If we note a pattern, recognizing our needs in the moment can be enormously fruitful for understanding our behavior with compassion and empathy, thereby increasing our ability to make conscious choices.
10. We are at choice at every moment, but we are not always at conscious choice. Choosing based on consciously trying to meet our needs is what we're working toward, rather than reflexively choosing to use NVC language.
11. The process of remembering that NVC is an option is akin to "waking up." We can look for key practices or other reminders that will help "wake us up."

## Moment of Choice Journal

1. Think of a situation in which you wished to use NVC but found yourself choosing not to use it. Choose a situation in which you recognize that you have a choice, vs. one in which you don't remember that NVC is an option. It may be a specific event or an ongoing situation. Write down the situation.
2. How do you feel about the situation you described and what needs of yours are not met?
3. Connect with the particular moment in which you recognize the option to use NVC. When you recognize that option, are there any judgments that you notice about your choice? Are you holding any "should," "have to," "right thing to do" or similar ideas? If yes, write them down, then translate the judgments into the feelings and needs that arise in you. If no, write down the feelings and needs you notice.
4. When you choose not to use NVC, what are your feelings and what needs you are trying to meet? (What are you saying "yes" to by saying "no" to NVC?)
5. Are there needs not met by the choice you are making? What are they, and what are your feelings related to those needs?
6. What needs might you meet by choosing to use NVC in this situation? What are your feelings related to those needs?
7. How are you feeling and what needs do you notice at this moment?

## Mediating Between Children - Keys

- a. Your aim as mediator is to support the quality of connection between everyone such that everyone's needs could be met, regardless of who did what.
- b. You may have intense reactions to what you see or hear. Understanding your reactions and connecting with your feelings and needs will free you to act from full choice rather than react from habits and judgments. This in turn will help you stay focused on the children's needs that led to their actions, and away from ideas of who is "right" and who is "wrong."
- c. Focus on long-range goals rather than on immediate strategies. What matters to you most?
- d. In place of playing the game of "whose fault is it" and "say you're sorry," shed light on both children's humanity. Moving out of the "fault/sorry" paradigm will help children avoid the guilt, shame and anger that usually accompany conflict. Over time, it will help them recognize the impact of their actions on others and be able to authentically express their sincere sadness about that impact.
- e. Avoid focusing on "fairness"; look instead at what each child's needs are and how to meet them. "Fairness" is only a big issue if trust is lacking that everyone's needs matter and can be met.
- f. Model how conflicts can be resolved peacefully by attending to both children's needs for trust, compassion, connection, care, understanding, hope, etc.
- g. If the children can't hear each other, you can take the lead in reflecting your understanding of their feelings and needs. It's fine for them not to articulate it themselves if it's hard for them or they don't want to - they'll learn by watching you.
- h. While you may feel drawn to empathize first or primarily with the "victim," open your heart to the "culprit" and consider focusing on empathizing with her or him. This will help shift the dynamic from one of blame and defensiveness into one of trust and compassion.
- i. "No" is always "yes" to some other need. Look for the need behind the "no" and empathize with it so you can build trust and confidence that everyone's needs truly matter.
- j. In NVC, the mediator can enter the dialogue, too. Share your own feelings and needs and make requests of the children that you believe would help contribute to meeting all your needs. It's helpful to think about the children as our partners in this situation - you can use their support to help you help them.
- k. Real-life mediation may look much more chaotic than the worksheet. Stay focused on the three NVC options: to empathize with one or more of the children, to express your own feelings, needs and requests, or to give yourself empathy if you need it. Tracking these three options will save you many detours into the "right/wrong," "fault/sorry," "judge/law-enforcement officer" realms.
- l. If force is necessary to protect someone, use force only protectively, not punitively or to educate. Use the minimum force for the minimum amount of time necessary to establish safety, then return to dialogue.

# Mediating Between Children Worksheet

## 1. Assess the situation:

Is someone getting physically hurt? Is there imminent danger that someone might get physically hurt? If so, your first task may be to use protective force to make sure no one is in a position to hurt him or herself or another.

## 2. Tune into your reaction to the situation - but don't react, self-empathize:

Judgments I'm having (such as who is "wrong" or "right," the "culprit" or "victim," etc.):

Underneath those judgments, what are your feelings and your needs that are not getting met? (This is self-empathy, the powerful process for transforming our relationship with ourselves into one of self-understanding, self-compassion, and the ability to make choices in line with our values.) This step is crucial so take your time identifying what's inside you.

My feelings: \_\_\_\_\_

My needs: \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Remember your long-range needs:

What matters to me most for our family is: \_\_\_\_\_

What I want to model while I'm mediating is: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. Tune your heart into compassion, and empathize with both children:

To child 1: Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

To child 2: Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

## 5. Imagine how the children might respond in real life:

Child 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Child 2: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Go underneath the first layer of empathy, and empathize with their responses:

(It takes more than one or two empathy guesses to meet a person's need for compassion and understanding!)

To child 1: Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

To child 2: Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_ because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

**7. You are part of this situation. Express what's in your own heart:**

When I see/hear: \_\_\_\_\_

I feel: \_\_\_\_\_

Because I need: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to: \_\_\_\_\_?

**8. Imagine how the children might respond in real life:**

Child 1: \_\_\_\_\_?

Child 2: \_\_\_\_\_?

**9. Recall your three options for how to respond, and choose one to use here:**

a. Self-Empathy: Focus primarily on connecting with your feelings and needs; after connecting, you can choose whether to empathize, self-express, or consider strategies.

How do I feel? \_\_\_\_\_

What do I need? \_\_\_\_\_

Do I have a request of myself or of the children? \_\_\_\_\_

b. Empathy: Are you feeling \_\_\_\_\_

because you need \_\_\_\_\_?

c. Self-Expression:

When I see/hear: \_\_\_\_\_

I feel: \_\_\_\_\_

Because I need: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to: \_\_\_\_\_?

# Transforming Self-Judgments

## KEYS:

- a. Any action that we judge ourselves about is, like all actions, an attempt to meet our needs. The judgment alerts us to the fact that some of our needs are not met by that action.
  - b. The action of judging ourselves is itself an attempt to meet needs.
  - c. Connecting fully with all our needs enables us to meet needs for self-acceptance, understanding and connection, even before we find new strategies that may meet more of our needs.
1. Write down a judgment you have of yourself that you would like to explore. This may be something you think about yourself that you completely believe is true.
  2. Think of a time or situation when you are likely to have this self-judgment come up, and write an observation of what you are actually doing at that time.
  3. What needs of yours are not met when you take the actions you just described? (The judgment alerts you to the fact that some of your needs are not met by this action.) And how do you feel when these needs are not met?
  4. All our actions are attempts to meet needs. Review the action you took that you are judging yourself about (the observation from #2 above). Which needs of yours are you trying to meet by taking this action? And what feelings do you have when you're acting to meet these needs?
  5. Reflect: are you actually succeeding in meeting these needs by taking these actions? (Whether your answer is yes or no, this is important information to have as you consider your options for how to act in the future.)
  6. Read through all of the needs you have identified and connected with so far. Are there any needs of yours that are met by spending this time connecting with your needs? Is there any internal shift in your energy about the judgment?
  7. If the judgment still seems as alive to you, consider the following question: Which needs of yours are you trying to meet by holding on to the judgment you have of yourself? How do you feel when you connect with these needs?
  8. Reflect on your feelings, needs, and any requests you have of yourself in this moment.



## Transforming Judgments of Others

### KEYS:

- a. Judging someone is an indication that a need of ours is not met. The first step in transforming judgments is to recognize and connect with our unmet needs.
  - b. The action we're judging is itself an attempt to meet needs. The second step is connecting with the needs of the person we're judging so we can open our hearts with compassion.
  - c. When we experience challenge in transforming our judgments, we can reflect on what needs we might be trying to meet by holding on to our judgments. Connecting with this set of needs may be essential to enable the previous two steps to proceed.
1. Write down a judgment you have of someone else that you would like to explore. This may be something you think about that person that you completely believe is true.
  2. Think of a time or situation when you are likely to have this judgment come up, and write an observation of what this person is actually doing at that time.
  3. What needs of yours are not met in relation to that person's action? How do you feel when these needs are not met? Explore this sufficiently to experience the relief of self-connection.
  4. Explore the possibility of opening your heart to this other person. What needs do you imagine this person might be trying to meet by taking this action? How might this person be feeling? Explore this sufficiently to experience the relief of compassion.
  5. Check in with yourself about your original judgment. Is it still alive? If yes, return to connecting with your own needs or with the other person's needs - wherever you're experiencing a "charge." If the judgment is still alive after that, consider: What needs might you be trying to meet by holding on to this judgment? What feelings arise in relation to this? Again, connect with yourself sufficiently about these needs to experience some relief.
  6. Check in with yourself again about the judgment. If it's still alive, consider the following set of questions:



## Deepening Needs Consciousness Journal

1. Think of a time when you were angry, dissatisfied, disappointed, or had some judgment of another person (in other words, a time when your needs were not met). Write down what the situation was.
2. Write down what you were feeling at the time.
3. Write down something you would have liked to see happen in that moment.
4. Spend a moment contemplating why what you identified in step 3 is important to you (find the need you are now aware of).
5. Focus your attention on how much you want this need. How are you feeling when you focus your attention in this way? Is this feeling different from the one you experienced at the time?
6. Ask yourself what need it would meet to have this need met, and write it down.
7. Focus your attention on how much you want this newly discovered need. How are you feeling now when you focus your attention? How is this feeling different from the one you experienced at the time, or in step 5?
8. Continue descending through these layers until you experience a sense of full connection with yourself, or some inner release.

# Power, Resources, and Choice - Parents

## 1. Power

The capacity to mobilize (inspire, generate) resources to meet needs.

### Exercise 1:

Check in with yourself about this definition of power.

- a. What feelings and needs arise in you?
- b. Are there any observations connected to these feelings and needs?
- c. Do you have a different definition that addresses your observations, feelings and needs more fully?

## 2. Resources

Strategies, ideas, things, or anything that can be used to meet needs.

**External** resources refer to things like money (or whatever other medium for obtaining survival needs, space, time, etc.), social support for our decision-making power (e.g. laws and social customs), connections, information, education, time, physical strength, health, mentors, nature, etc. Also refers to organizational structures that prioritize some people's needs over others.

A sub-section of external resources are relational resources, including other people's habits, choices and values, such as habits of compliance (more resources for us) and rebellion (fewer resources for us), value for meeting everyone's needs (more resources for us), etc.

**Internal** resources refer specifically to things that are completely independent of our personal or social situation, such as our levels of self-connection, access to compassion, awareness of choice, capacity to make choices that meet our own and others' needs, stories and belief systems we have about life, our constitutional, learned and nurtured resources, etc.

### Exercise 2 A:

Consider the following questions in relation to parenting - your responses might be different in relation to different areas.

- a. What external resources can you identify that you have? Include relational resources in connection with your child.

- b. What external resources do you not have? Include relational resources in connection with your child.
- c. What internal resources can you identify that you have?
- d. What internal resources do you not have?
- e. Identify 1-3 internal resources that you would like to develop. For each one, note how NVC might support you in developing these resource.

### **Exercise 2 B:**

Check in with yourself about the other person's access to resources.

- a. What external resources can you identify that your child has? Include relational resources in connection with you.
- b. What external resources does your child not have? Include relational resources in connection with you.
- c. What internal resources can you identify that your child has?
- d. What internal resources does your child not have?
- e. Identify 1-3 internal resources that you would like to support your child to develop. For each one, note how NVC might support you in supporting your child in this area.

## **3. Power-over and Power-with**

### **Power-over:**

**Focus:** Meeting one's own needs, possibly including the need for contribution to the other person.

**Action:** Mobilizing resources to meet our needs whether or not others' needs will be met. In particular, even if some needs may be met for another person, the need for full choice would not be met for that person.

### **Power-with:**

**Focus:** Supporting autonomous choice for both people and meeting both people's needs.

**Action:** Growing our capacity to hold everyone's needs equally precious, without holding more value for one's own or for others' needs; to refrain from mobilizing resources to meet one's own needs until both people are satisfied that their needs can be met; and to use power over others only to protect (protective use of force).

**Exercise 3:**

In your relationship with your child:

- a. How are you using your power to get what you want?
- b. What needs are met then? What feelings arise in relation to these needs?
- c. What needs are not met? What feelings arise in relation to these needs?
- d. If you consider shifting to power-with, what needs do you notice arising that may be met? What feelings arise in relation to these needs?
- e. What needs arise that may be unmet? What feelings arise in relation to these needs?
- f. What might you do to transform your use of power? Identify resources you might need within yourself or from outside yourself that would help support this choice.

**4. Structural power**

Having sufficient external resources such that we have the option to exercise power over other people. When we have structural power, the choice about what will happen ultimately resides with us. We may choose not to use our power, but it's our choice.

**Exercise 4:**

- a. Does this definition match your experience as a parent?
- b. How do you feel about it? What needs arise for you as you contemplate this definition?
- c. How do you feel and what needs arise after exploring this topic? Any requests of yourself?

## Instructions for Life Labs

During this time, you will be focusing on an area of your life that you want to see movement in. Each person will have a turn to address any of the questions below that are meaningful to her or him, as well as other questions that may arise. For each question, ask yourself what you would like from your partner/group right now that would help you with that question. Connect empathically as needed, but the focus here is on developing strategies for compassionate change by moving into change from needs rather than judgments.

1. What is an area of challenge for you as a parent that you would like to see change or movement in?
  
2. What are some observations of what you are doing that you would like to do differently?
  
3. Are you having any judgments of yourself in relation to your actions?
  
4. What needs are you trying to meet or meeting by acting in those ways?
  
5. What needs might be met by focusing on creating new strategies for meeting these needs? Are there any needs that wouldn't be met by doing that? (Go back to previous steps if you are feeling "stuck.")
  
6. Check back with the needs met and unmet in how you are currently handling this area of challenge. What are some strategies that might meet more of those needs?
  
7. Creating support for making change and for reconnecting repeatedly with your needs as you try to apply new strategies:
  - a. Who would be the people that could offer you support?
  - b. What needs of theirs might be met by offering you support?
  - c. What specific, doable requests could you make to these people?
  - d. What might get in your way of reaching for this support?

# Gratitude and Appreciation in NVC

## KEYS:

- a. Judging things as "good" or "right" is not different in essence from judging them as "bad" or "wrong" - they belong to the same paradigm, and our evaluation can easily shift from "good" to "bad." Translating our positive evaluations into NVC frees us from this paradigm and from the role of "judge."
- b. When we enjoy something or are grateful, expressing what needs of ours are met can be powerful and deeply satisfying to our children and to us.
- c. By expressing our observations, feelings and needs instead of praising, we contribute to meeting our children's needs for intrinsic motivation and for contribution.

**A. Think of something your child has done which has affected your life in a way that you feel grateful for, OR, think of something your child has done which you have praised or might praise them for. Express your gratitude or "praise" in NVC:**

1. What did your child do?
2. How do you feel in relation to what he or she did?
3. Which needs of yours were met by this action?

**B. Use the same process to identify something for which you are grateful to yourself as a parent:**

1. What did I do or what am I doing?
2. How do I feel about what I did or what I am doing?
3. What needs of mine were or are met by this action?



## Daily Mourning and Learning

1. What's something you did today with your child that you have some mourning around (observation)?
2. What needs of yours were not met by this? What feelings arise when you notice these unmet needs?
3. Take some time to connect with the need. Shift your focus from how this need was not met, to the need itself. You can use the phrase: "I have a need for ...." Notice what feelings arise now.
4. Shift your focus now to understanding yourself. How were you feeling when you did this? What needs were you trying to meet by doing it?
5. Again take time to connect with the need. Shift your focus from trying to meet the need, to the need itself. You can use the phrase: "I have a need for ...." Notice what feelings arise now.
6. Spend a moment reflecting on both your unmet needs and on the needs you were trying to meet. What feelings arise in this moment?
7. What would have been another option for you to try in that moment that may have met your needs more fully? (If this question triggers any self-judgments, use the "Translating Self-Judgments" worksheet, or take time for self-empathy.)
8. Do you have any requests of yourself or others around you in relation to this situation?

# Daily Gratitude

1. What happened today that you feel particularly grateful for (observation)?
2. What needs did this meet?
3. Do you have any requests of yourself or others in relation to this situation?

**Sunday:**

**Monday:**

**Tuesday:**

**Wednesday:**

**Thursday:**

**Friday:**

**Saturday:**

## Harvest and Celebration: Sunday, 7/18/10

What have you learned today? Share 3 - 5 insights, celebrations, new awarenesses ....

How do you see yourself taking these new insights and implementing them in the interactions with yourself and your family members? In other words: What requests do you have of yourself and or others to implement this new knowledge into your daily life?

## Harvest and Celebration: Monday, 7/19/10

What have you learned today? Share 3 - 5 insights, celebrations, new awarenesses ....

How do you see yourself taking these new insights and implementing them in the interactions with yourself and your family members? In other words: What requests do you have of yourself and or others to implement this new knowledge into your daily life?

## Harvest and Celebration: Tuesday, 7/20/10

What have you learned today? Share 3 - 5 insights, celebrations, new awarenesses ....

How do you see yourself taking these new insights and implementing them in the interactions with yourself and your family members? In other words: What requests do you have of yourself and or others to implement this new knowledge into your daily life?

## Harvest and Celebration: Wednesday, 7/21/10

What have you learned today? Share 3 - 5 insights, celebrations, new awarenesses ....

How do you see yourself taking these new insights and implementing them in the interactions with yourself and your family members? In other words: What requests do you have of yourself and or others to implement this new knowledge into your daily life?

## Harvest and Celebration: Thursday, 7/22/10

What have you learned today? Share 3 - 5 insights, celebrations, new awarenesses ....

How do you see yourself taking these new insights and implementing them in the interactions with yourself and your family members? In other words: What requests do you have of yourself and or others to implement this new knowledge into your daily life?

## Harvest and Celebration: Monday, 7/23/10

What have you learned today? Share 3 - 5 insights, celebrations, new awarenesses ....

How do you see yourself taking these new insights and implementing them in the interactions with yourself and your family members? In other words: What requests do you have of yourself and or others to implement this new knowledge into your daily life?



## Harvest and Celebration: Tuesday, 7/24/10

What have you learned today? Share 3 - 5 insights, celebrations, new awarenesses ....

How do you see yourself taking these new insights and implementing them in the interactions with yourself and your family members? In other words: What requests do you have of yourself and or others to implement this new knowledge into your daily life?