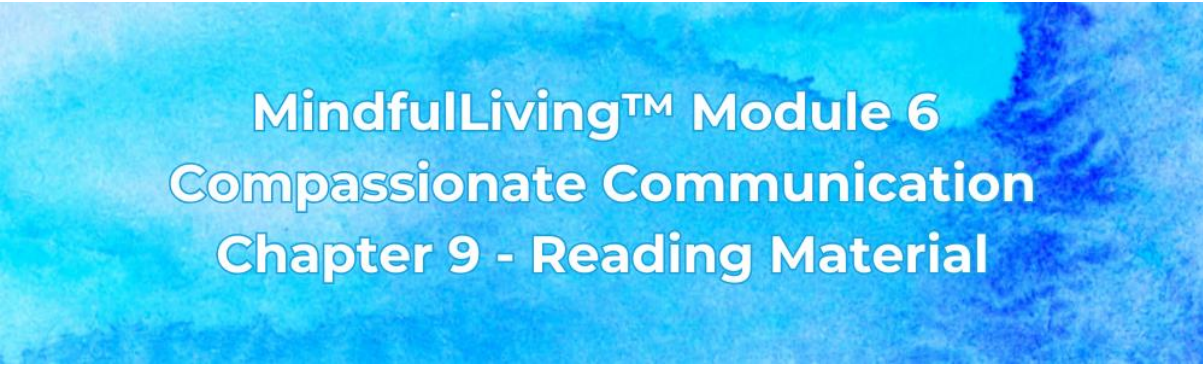




MindfulLiving™ Module 6

Compassionate Communication

Chapter 9 - Reading Material

The Heart of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) A Brief Introduction to the Concepts of NVC

By Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D.

Adapted from Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life



The Heart of Non-Voilent Communication by Marshall Rosenberg

www.sheryclein.com
shery@sheryclein.com

Compassion as Our Natural State

Compassion is our natural state of being, and it brings joy when we give and receive from the heart. This belief has driven my exploration of two key questions: What disconnects us from this compassionate nature, causing us to behave violently or exploitatively? And what empowers some to remain connected to compassion, even in the face of adversity?

Through my studies, I've found that how we communicate plays a significant role in maintaining or disrupting compassion. Although we might not view our everyday language as "violent," the words we use can cause hurt and create distance between us and others.

Our communication often involves moralistic judgments, labels, and evaluations that can distance us from compassion. This led me to develop a new approach to communication called Nonviolent Communication (NVC), which fosters a connection from the heart, allowing compassion to flourish.

Reconnecting to Compassion

NVC guides us to reframe how we express ourselves and hear others. Rather than reacting automatically, NVC encourages mindful responses based on what we perceive, feel, and need at the moment. This practice enables honest and straightforward self-expression while fostering respectful, empathetic attention toward others.

NVC allows us to identify and articulate behaviours that affect us without passing judgment. This creates an opportunity for deeper understanding and compassion between individuals. Though simple in its structure, NVC can have profound, transformative effects on communication.

A New Focus of Attention

There's a story about a man searching for his car keys under a streetlight. When asked by a policeman if he dropped them there, he replied that he had dropped them in an alley, but the light was better under the streetlight. This humorous anecdote illustrates how, like the man in the story, we often focus our attention on areas that won't help us achieve what we seek.

NVC shifts our attention to areas that offer the potential for greater understanding and connection. Even if those we communicate with are unfamiliar with NVC, we can remain focused on giving and receiving compassionately. When others sense this is our only motive, they often join us in the process.

While this shift doesn't always happen immediately, compassion will eventually emerge when we stay true to the principles of NVC.

The NVC Process

The NVC process is grounded in four key components, which help us achieve mutual understanding and compassionate communication:

- 1. Observation**

We first observe what others are saying or doing without attaching any judgment or evaluation. For example, a mother might tell her son, "Felix, when I see two balls of soiled socks under the coffee table and three more next to the TV..."

- 2. Feelings**

Next, we identify how these observations make us feel. In the same example, the mother continues, "I feel irritated..."

3. Needs

We then express the underlying need connected to our feelings. For example, the mother might add, "...because I need more order in the rooms we share."

4. Requests

Finally, we make an explicit, specific request to the other person to meet our needs. The mother finishes by asking, "Would you be willing to put your socks in your room or in the washing machine?"

NVC involves expressing these four components with clarity. Equally important is the ability to listen for and receive the same information from others. When we attune ourselves to what the other person is observing, feeling, needing, and requesting, we create a flow of compassionate communication.

Applying NVC in Everyday Life

NVC can be used in various settings, from personal relationships to professional environments and even in resolving political conflicts. By focusing on compassionate communication, we stay grounded in our natural state of empathy.

People worldwide have adopted NVC to resolve conflicts, deepen their relationships, and foster understanding in diverse settings, including communities facing violence and political tension.

I am grateful to have the opportunity to teach this approach worldwide, and with my book, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, I am excited to share these life-enriching practices with others.

Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D., is the founder and director of educational services for the Centre for Nonviolent Communication and the author of *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, among other works.



Thank you for your valuable participation in this journey of self-awareness and communication. I hope you found the tools in this valuable module to foster healthier connections in your life. Remember to approach every conversation with mindfulness and compassion. Should you have any questions or need further support, please reach out. Blessings, stay healthy! Love, Shery Clein, MindfulLiving™ Coach
Advocating Awareness Intelligence.

