

## **\*REQUESTS\***

- A. Requests are specific, present, and doable.**
- B. Connecting requests are intended to aid people in connecting.** Examples:  
    **“I want to make sure that I’ve expressed myself clearly.** Would you be willing to tell me, in your own words, what you’ve heard me say?”  
    “Would you be willing to tell me how you feel in relation to what I’ve said?”
- C. “Action” requests are for when you’d like the person to take a specific action.**  
    “Would you be willing to put the clothes in the washer within the next five minutes?”  
    “I was thinking that we could leave in 10 minutes. Does that work for you?”
- D. The true measure of a request is not so much in how the request is worded, but in the response that is given if the person does not agree to the request.**

Example: Is Doris’s request really a “request” or actually a “demand?”

Doris: “Would you be willing to pick up some stamps on your way home?”

Jackie: “No, I’m too tired.”

If a demand, Doris might respond: “You can rest later—I need those stamps!”

--OR--

If a request, Doris might respond by trying to connect with what is preventing Jackie from saying “yes:” “Being so tired, are you eager to get home so you can rest?”

## **\*FEELINGS\***

- A. **In Nonviolent Communication, we talk about feelings as emotional states without thoughts attached.** Here are some examples of feelings:

**angry, delighted, hopeless, thrilled, irritated, content, satisfied, dissatisfied**

- B. **Commonly, people use words that more accurately describe thoughts than feelings.** Here are a few of these “thinking” words, with some possible feeling translations in parentheses:

misunderstood (feeling **angry, sad frustrated, dismayed** or **confused**)

taken advantage of (feeling **disappointed, exasperated, furious** or **weary**)

isolated (feeling **lonely, blue, anxious** or **unsettled**)

cheated (**feeling angry, indignant** or **irate**)

- C. **Here are a couple of thoughts that you could translate into feelings for practice:**

Thought: intimidated

Feeling:

Thought: inadequate

Feeling:

## **\*NEEDS\***

- A. **Universal needs have no reference to specific action, time, place or person.** They are called “universal” because everyone needs them in order to survive and thrive. Here are some examples:

**connection, autonomy, compassion, intimacy, self-empowerment, play, order, meaning, peace, security, honesty, love, support**

- B. **Strategies to meet these needs might be hiding the true needs.** In NVC, we are encouraged to dig below these strategies for what needs might be underneath:

Strategy: I need you to do the dishes.

Need: I need cleanliness, order, support and/or cooperation

Strategy: I need a vacation.

Needs: I need rest, inspiration, connection, beauty, peace and/or autonomy.

- C. **Sometimes the word “need” is a trigger for people, and using it repeatedly may add more blocks than bridges to your communication.** Here are some other ways of expressing needs:

I value, I would like, I’m hoping for, I want I envision, I appreciate

- D. **Here are a couple strategies that you can translate to feelings and needs for practice:**

Strategy: I need you to be quiet.

Need:

Strategy: I need to get rid of the dog.

Need:

## NVC is about...

**Getting to a place beyond judgment.** Do you want to use your energy judging a person or situation, or do you want to use your energy working toward resolution?

**Intent.** NVC is only peripherally about the actual words we say; it is, rather, about the intent of connection.

**Connection.** When two people achieve connection both with themselves and the other person, agreeable solutions for both people always emerge. And as everyone's needs are met by the solutions, there is no need for punishment or reward to enforce them.

**Observations.** Describing what is happening without evaluation gives people a common ground from which to start.

**Feelings.** By sharing how we are feeling in relation to a situation, we are expressing a state of being with which everyone can identify and no one can refute.

**Needs.** When we link feelings to needs, we take full responsibility for ourselves and gently defuse any attempt to give or receive blame.

**Requests.** Requesting is where we give others the gift of contributing to our fulfillment in life, but never at the expense of their own fulfillment.

**Action.** With NVC, we understand every action as an attempt to meet needs. By getting in touch with the needs being met by the action, we come to an appreciation of the positive motivation behind every action. We also increase the number of ways that needs can be met.

**Trust.** By speaking and acting without judgments or any sense of obligation, we experience and put our trust in the natural compassion and generosity of all human beings.

### **\*OBSERVATIONS\***

**A. Generally, an observation is something that can be recorded by a video camera, like:**

“I received 12 emails from Chris today.” Or

Sam said, “Your idea is terrible.” (though “terrible” is a judgment, any direct quote is observable)

**B. Observations do not include the speaker's opinions or views.** For example, I would consider this an evaluation:

“You ignore me,” while I would consider this an observation:

“As I was talking, you walked out of the room.”

**C. Sometimes an observation can be something you are thinking about.** I use this when trying to make a decision, such as:

“When I consider taking the job...” or

“When I think about eating another cookie...”

**D. Here are some evaluations you can use to practice translating into neutral observations** (see B above for an example):

**Evaluation:** When you talk so rudely...

**Observation:**

**Evaluation:** When you left the house a mess...

**Observation:**