

A Taste of Compassionate Leadership: *The Zero Step*

January 2017

“This intention is to create the quality of connection with other people and oneself that allows compassionate giving to take place. In this sense it is a spiritual practice: All actions are taken for the sole purpose of willingly contributing to the well-being of others and ourselves.

The primary purpose of Nonviolent Communication is to connect with other people in a way that enables giving to take place: compassionate giving. It's compassionate in that our giving comes willingly from the heart. We are giving service to others and ourselves –not out of duty or obligation, not out of fear of punishment or hope for a reward, not out of guilt or shame, but for what I consider part of our nature. It's in our nature to enjoy giving to one another.”
Marshall B Rosenberg, Ph.D.

Lesson 1: The Story of the Zero Step

- Define : Intention to Connect • Attention: in the Present

Characteristics of the Zero Step

- Warmth toward self and other
- Care for the vitality of both yourself and other(s)
- Wonder/interest Vulnerability
- Empathy
- Which leads directly to Connection Requests
- Openness to Outcome

Think of an example in your own life when you have experienced your Zero Step

Exercise: What is your take-away from this lesson on the Zero Step? Consider writing your thoughts feelings and needs in a journal or notebook.

Lesson 2: What's the problem?

“Also, think about your intentionality — are you getting lost in the method? or coming from the intentionality, the purpose? You don't want to do the mechanics without the consciousness. --
Marshall B. Rosenberg

What's the problem? “During the initial phases of learning this process, we may find ourselves applying the components of NVC mechanically without awareness of the underlying purpose.”
Marshall B. Rosenberg

“NVC is about honest expression free from the habitual ways we manipulate such as reward/punishment, denial of choice, inducing guilt or a whole host of other tried and trusted methods.”
Ian Peatey

Without the zero step, NVC can become:

- a mechanical process
- an analytical process
- Without the zero step NVC can be experienced as manipulative
- another example of jackal: right way to use NVC, eg. Right way to be vulnerable, right way to be empathic; corrective

“We might ask ourselves whether we are more intent on applying the process “correctly” than on connecting with the human being in front of us. Or perhaps, even though we are using the form of NVC, our only interest is in changing the other person’s behavior.” -Marshall

Exercise: Empathy Practice: Groups of 2; Listening to one another about what it is like to experience these “problems”, as “sender and/or receiver”

1. Speaker has the floor for five minutes;
2. Listener listens with Space, Presence and Focus on the feelings and needs of the Speaker.
3. If the speaker asks for a reflection, listener responds.
4. When bell rings, Listener expresses Needs met (1 minute)
5. Then, Switch

Lesson 3 What’s the best thing that could happen?

With the zero-step NVC:

- fulfills its strategic function: to create a quality of connection that inspires compassionate giving and receiving.
- helps one cultivate natural warmth toward self and other *With the zero-step NVC:*
- one naturally flows to self-connection to recover from one’s own reactivity
- one can enjoy empathizing with another person’s pain
- one naturally experiences and conveys vulnerability
- one naturally experiences and conveys gratitude
- one flows naturally toward requests that address everyone’s needs

How do we cultivate the zero step? Generating the Intention to Connect

- Acknowledge, “I am Giraffe”, or “I’m putting on my giraffe ears.”
- Cultivate Warmth toward self and other
- Care for your vitality as well as the vitality of other(s)
- Cultivate Gratitude
- Cultivate interest in what is alive: What’s actually happening? What feelings are arising? Who needs what right now? What might help?
- Mental practice
- “To refocus my mind on what purpose my action is serving.” -Marshall

Write down one new thing that you can do to cultivate your zero step.

Note Next meeting will be on Zoom

For video, download software for computer, phone, etc,

Phone only is ok

Need to follow registration instructions from NVC Academy