

# Non-violent Communication (NVC)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonviolent\\_communication](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonviolent_communication) // <http://www.empathy-conexus.com>

NVC is a language that helps us to connect with ourselves and others to understand one another, and to explore ways we can willingly and naturally contribute to one another's well-being.

## Guiding principles:

### Troubling perspectives

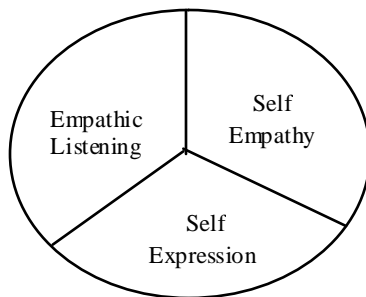
- Depression, guilt, blame, labeling, obeying should, demands, comparing judgment (whose fault?), and shame = alarm clock not meeting needs
- Any words we use that imply the wrongness of others are *tragic* and *suicidal*. Tragic because it doesn't lead to people enjoying contributing to our wellbeing, and suicidal because we get defensiveness and counter-aggression. Diagnoses and judgments are tragic and suicidal.
- Anger requires a moralistic judgment to keep it going, a "should." There is no connection there.
- What people do is not the cause of our feelings. We are responsible for our own feelings.
- Changes in attitude rarely result from displayed facts, lawyerly arguments, or other attempts to persuade.
- Time pressure, situational stress, pain, laziness, anger, fear, envy, pride, and greed are all stumbling blocks toward compassionate communication.
- Agreeing to disagree. This perspective inherently includes disconnection.
- False hope of NVC newbies: "Now I'm going to get my needs met!"

### Helpful perspectives

- Seek to understand before being understood.
- Connection is of primary importance. You can't be making a connection and a point at the same time.
- We are responsible for advocating for our needs. It isn't anyone else's job but our own. Clean communication.
- Every choice we make is in service of a need. All behavior is communication
- Nothing feels better than contributing to another person's well being. In the past 48 hours, what have been your brightest moments? Reflect on a moment when you were really open to giving and receiving.
- When we don't "hear" people's pain, it keeps coming out in ways that make empathy even harder.
- Right Speech. It is spoken at the right time. It is spoken in truth. It is spoken affectionately. It is spoken beneficially. It is spoken with a mind of good-will.
- Power = the capacity to mobilize resources to meet our needs. Power With = I strive to identify, connect with, and meet my needs as well as others' needs. Power Over = I strive to meet my needs whether or not it meets others' needs.

## Universe of Model Application

There are only three ways to apply the model of Non-violent Communication. See Dance Floor later. That's it. There is no other way. These are your only options, ever.



## Model: (more a consciousness than a technique)

Self-expression		Empathy (other or self)	
Observation	When I see / hear . . .	Observation	[When you see/hear . . .]
Feeling	I feel . . .	Feeling	Are you feeling . . .
Need	Because I need . . .	Need	Because you need . . .
Request	Would you be willing?	Request	[Would you like . . .?]

## Model Detail:

### Observations:

Description of what is seen or heard without added interpretations. Supports seeking common ground.

- Everyone needs to agree with the observation, like what a video camera would record
- There are no evaluations; it's what is without spin. Data. Pure info. "Just the facts."
- For example, instead of "She's having a temper tantrum," you could say "She is lying on the floor crying and kicking." Without adverbs.

Examples: "Remembering when . . ." "When I think about . . ." "When I see you do . . ."  
"When I hear you say . . ." "I'm noticing . . ."

### 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 worried."
- Avoid the following phrasing: "I feel like . . ." and "I feel that . . ." – the next words will be thoughts or behaviors, not feelings. Instead of saying "I feel like crying" say "I feel sad and frustrated"
- For folks allergic to the word "feel," just say the feeling without the word feeling "I'm upset." "I'm delighted." "I'm hurt." If they are really allergic, skip the feeling and go for the need instead.

Examples: "I get really . . ." "I am . . ." "I've noticed that I've been feeling . . ."  
"Sounds like you're feeling a bit . . ." "I imagine you're feeling kind of . . ."  
"I wonder if you're feeling . . ." "Seems like you're feeling sort of . . ."

### 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. Needs don't refer to a specific action, thing, or person.
- For example, "I feel annoyed because I need support" rather than "I feel annoyed because you didn't do the dishes."

Examples: "I love" "I thrive on" "I really enjoy" "I would be nourished by" "I value" "I want"  
". . . matters to me" ". . . is fun for me" "I feel as I do, because I am needing . . ."  
"Were you hoping . . ." "Would you have liked . . ." "Sounds as if you really wanted . . ."  
"Perhaps you would have preferred . . ." "And now you'd like . . ." "It's important to me to have . . ."  
"You really missed me?" "You want to do your own thing?" "You don't want to do a chore?"  
"You want the same for everyone?" "You want to just chill by yourself?"

### Requests:

Doable, immediate, concrete, and stated in positive action language (what you want instead of what you don't want).

- Demands are often disguised as questions; there is only one right answer. "Would you clean your room now?"
- A good 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?"
- Requests are disconnected from demands. A Request is a Strategy if there is no negative consequence to saying no. A demand will piss you or the other person off in some manner if the answer is no.
- You're asking for understanding, connection, or an action. Striving to meet everyone's needs.
- By definition, when we make requests, we are open to hearing a "no," taking it as an opportunity for further dialogue. *You have to hear the YES and the NO. What are they saying "yes" to that is inviting them to say "No" to my request? What are the needs behind their choices?*
- A "No" is really a "Trans-Yes-Tite"

Examples: "Tell me what comes up for you when I say this . . ." "How do you feel about what I just said?"  
"I really appreciate your . . . (intention/behavior) . . . can you look at where I might be coming from?"  
"Would you like to hear how I feel about that?" "What does that sound like to you?"  
"Would you be willing to toss ideas around to find something that works for both of us?"  
"What did you get out of what I just said?" "Would you let me know what you heard me say?"  
"Can you tell me how you feel right now?" "What's your reaction to this?" "What's up?"  
"How does that sit with you?" "Does that work for you?" "Does that ring true?"  
"Would you tell me what you need in order to agree to my request?"  
"Would you tell me your understanding of my feelings and needs?"  
"Would you tell me what needs of yours are preventing you from saying yes to my request?"

## Questions for self reflection before communicating

These are solo, reflection questions – not a dialogue you enter with someone right away

- ✚ What's alive in me? Clearly expressing how I am. My "please." Receive, with empathy, how you are.
- ✚ What's alive in them? What might their feelings and needs be, both met and unmet?
- ✚ What can I do to make life more wonderful?
- ✚ What do I want them to do?
- ✚ What do I want the person's reasons to be for doing what I want them to do?
- ✚ What do I need to know about their needs so they can freely give me what I want?
- ✚ What gets in the way of my holding their needs dear?
- ✚ Rate the intensity of my feelings – is this a 2 or 10? Is this an 8 or 9 for me?
- ✚ I have to hear the YES and the NO. What are they saying "yes" to that is inviting them to say "No" to my request? What are the needs behind their choices? They are choosing something positive and bright.
- ✚ What needs of mine are preventing me from saying yes to their request?
- ✚ Can I understand them the way they'd like to be understood?

## Feelings

- ✚ Feelings let us know how we are doing; how our "becoming" is going. Reflects a met or unmet need.
- ✚ Higher stakes often involve more intense feelings, which may increase the difficulty of practicing NVC.
- ✚ The lists of feelings and needs are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative.

Faux, or Foe, Feelings			
What are they		Examples	
✚	interpretations masquerading as feelings	Abandoned	Ignored
✚	something someone else has done to us	Abused	Intimidated
✚	judgment about the other	Attacked	Invisible
✚	inflare instead of inform	Betrayed	Judged
✚	give away your power and responsibility	Bullied	Let down
✚	bom from fear and sadness – need to get to needs below those	Cheated	Manipulated
		Disrespected	Neglected
			Overreacting
			Put upon
			Rejected
			Resentful
			Rushed
			Unappreciated
			Wronged

Feelings					
Joy and Contentment			Fear and Anxiety		
Adventurous	Loving	Pleased	Afraid	Disturbed	Puzzled
Affectionate	Moved	Proud	Alarmed	Dread	Reluctant
Alive	Overjoyed	Refreshed	Anxious	Dubious	Restless
Amazed	Peaceful	Relaxed	Apprehensive	Embarrassed	Scared
Amused	Excited	Relieved	Bewildered	Impatient	Sensitive
Astonished	Fascinated	Satisfied	Cautious	Hesitant	Shocked
Calm	Friendly Giddy	Stimulated	Concerned	Jittery	Stressed
Confident	Glad	Surprised	Confused	Nervous	Terrified
Content	Grateful	Thankful	Desperate	Overwhelmed	Uncomfortable
Curious	Happy	Thrilled	Distressed	Panicky	Worried
Delighted	Hopeful	Touched	Distant	Peplexed	
Determined	Inspired	Tranquil			
Eager	Intrigued	Trusting			
Ecstatic	Invigorated	Upbeat			
Encouraged	Joyful				
			Anger & Frustration		
			Aggravated	Enraged	Irate
			Agitated	Exasperated	Irritated
			Angry	Frustrated	Peplexed
			Annoyed	Furious	Pessimistic
			Appalled	Impatient	Upset
			Bitter	Indifferent	
			Cranky	Indignant	
			Disgusted	Infuriated	
Sadness and Grief					
Bored	Exhausted	Sad / Sorrowful			
Depressed	Helpless	Skeptical			
Disappointed	Hopeless	Tired			
Discouraged	Hurt	Troubled			
Disheartened	Lonely				
Dismayed	Melancholic				
Despairing	Miserable				

**"People try nonviolence for a week, and when it does not work, they go back to violence, which hasn't worked for centuries." Theodore Roszak**

# Needs

- ✚ Needs are the means/vocabulary of our becoming. Needs are your yes. They serve life.
- ✚ We are not responsible for meeting other people's needs. People need to be responsible for meeting their own needs, and for their own feelings. We can still acknowledge the interdependence that exists though, and honor and negotiate the needs people often commit to meeting for one another.
- ✚ Needs vs. Strategies. Strategies are how people go about trying to meet their needs. When people communicate their strategy as a need, it is often heard as a demand. What = need. How = strategy.
- ✚ NVC may not result in the resolution of a shared strategy to meet the needs of those involved. There are irreconcilable conflicts of strategies, e.g., Israel and Palestine, past relationships, etc. Feelings and needs can be perfectly understood, but the strategies to get those needs met does not match.
- ✚ The lists of feelings and needs are not intended to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative.
- ✚ Success Counselor need mapping:
  - Fun Leisure, Creation
  - Love and Belonging Identity/Meaning, Understanding, Transcendence, Affection
  - Freedom Freedom
  - Survival and Safety Substence, Protection/Security
  - Power and Worth Creation, Participation, Identity/Meaning, Understanding

Needs				
Subsistence	Protection/Security	Participation	Freedom	Identity/Meaning
Clean Air & Water	Fairness	Accomplishment	Autonomy	Acknowledgement
Food	Honesty	Acceptance	Choices	Appreciation
Rest	Justice	Belonging	Allowing	Challenges
Shelter	Keeping Agreements	Capacity	To Speak One's Mind	Clarity
Sustenance	Nurturance	Community		Completion
	Openness	Competence		Dignity
	Order	Connection		Integrity
<b>Creation</b>	Safety	Dependability	<b>Understanding</b>	Learning New Skills
	Space	Encouragement	Balance	Privacy
	Trust	Harmony	Consideration	Resolution
Creativity		Interdependence	Empathy	Self-Development
Expression	<b>Leisure</b>	Opportunities To	Peace of mind	Self-Mastery
Inspiration	Adventure	Help Others	To be heard / known	Solitude
	Celebration	Power With		To Be Someone
	Comfort & Ease	Recognition	<b>Transcendence</b>	To Make Sense Of One's World
<b>Affection</b>	Play & Fun	Respect	Beauty To Behold	
	Recreation	Support	Goodness	
Companionship	Spontaneity	To Enrich Life	Love	
Friends		To Serve Life	Peace	
Intimacy		To Share Life's	Rhythm	
Kindness		Joys & Sorrows		
To Matter To Someone				
Touch				

## Shifting world views

Old World View	New World View		Old World View	New World View
Truth	Thoughts		Intent to correct	Intent to connect
Thoughts / Evaluations	Observations		Life-alienating	Life-serving
Evaluations	Feelings		Head	Heart
Strategies	Needs		Being (still)	Becoming (evolving)
Demands	Requests		Defy or comply	Choice
			Extrinsic motives	Intrinsic motives
			Power over others	Power with others
			Moralistic judgments	Value judgments

## Giraffe and Jackal

The image of the giraffe was chosen because:

- it has the largest heart of any land animal
- because it takes a broad view of things
- its saliva dissolves thorns

The image for the jackal was chosen because:

1. it's ready to pounce, attack
2. it's aggressive, not interested in hearing or discussing
3. it's clever, stealthy, goes for the throat

## Preparing for Self-expression

1. Briefly describe the situation (2-3 sentences)
2. Jackal In and Jackal Out – bring your Jackal thoughts into awareness. Notice language such as blame, labels, deserve, should, good/bad, right/wrong, and threats
  - a. About yourself
  - b. About the other
3. Giraffe In – what feelings come up around this? Be generous with the number and variety of feelings you can be experiencing.
4. Giraffe In – what needs are you wishing were being met? Use both your feelings and Jackal thoughts to guide you.
5. Giraffe Out – Imagine what the other person might be feeling.
6. Giraffe Out – What might some needs be behind the other person's possible feelings?
7. What is the most neutral observation you can make about this situation? Consider thinking of one specific event if there have been numerous occasions. They can be done one at a time if that is helpful.
8. Can you think of more concrete actions that might contribute to meeting your needs? Can you hold them lightly and be ready to negotiate to contribute to meeting the other person's needs as well as your own?

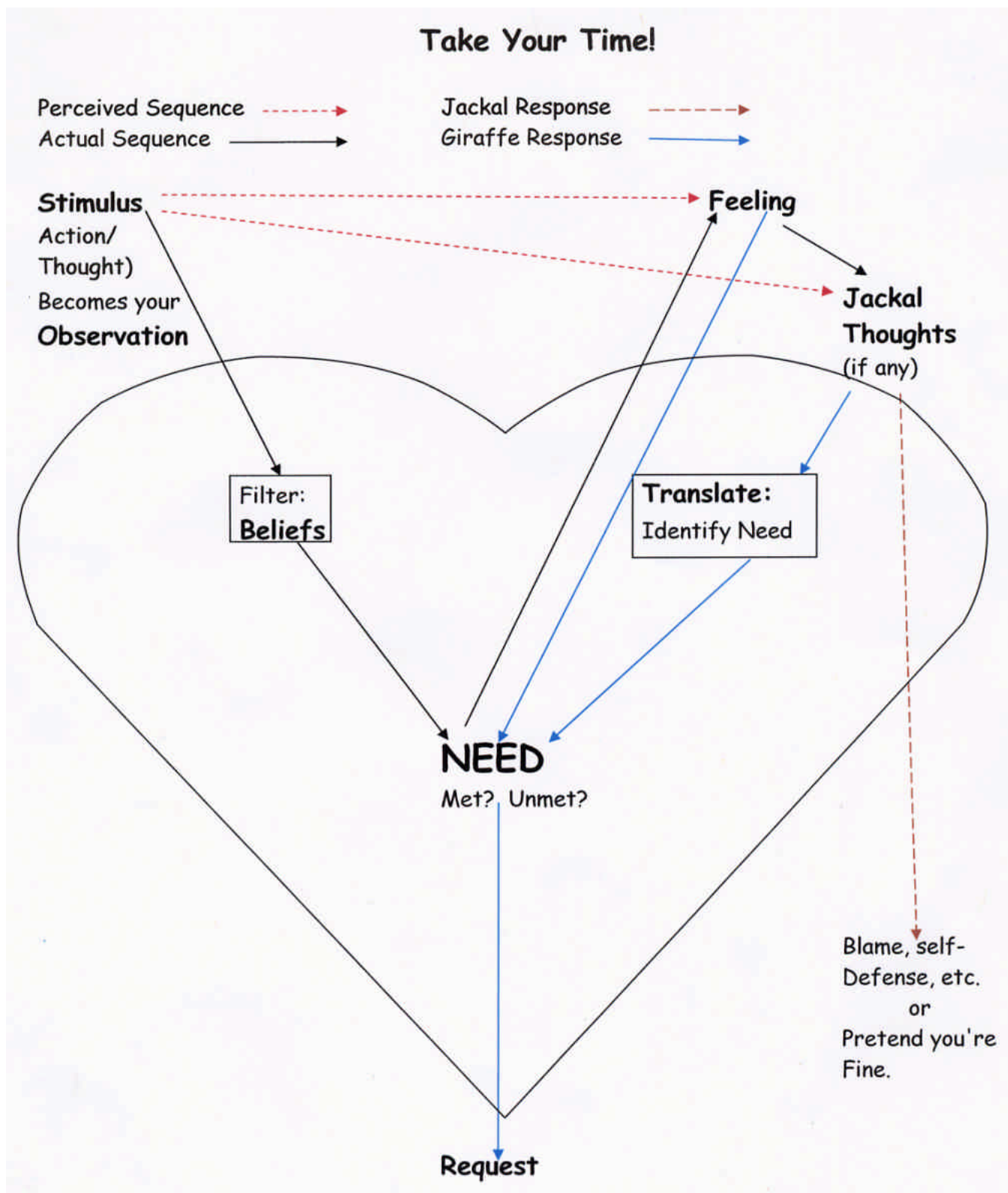
## Needs Literacy Exercise

1. List what you say to yourself when you're less than perfect
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. List what your Jackal messages are when you're angry and/or judging others
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
3. List what you respond to defensively or aggressively when you hear it
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
4. List what you're so afraid people will say to you, that you become a nice, dead person to avoid it.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

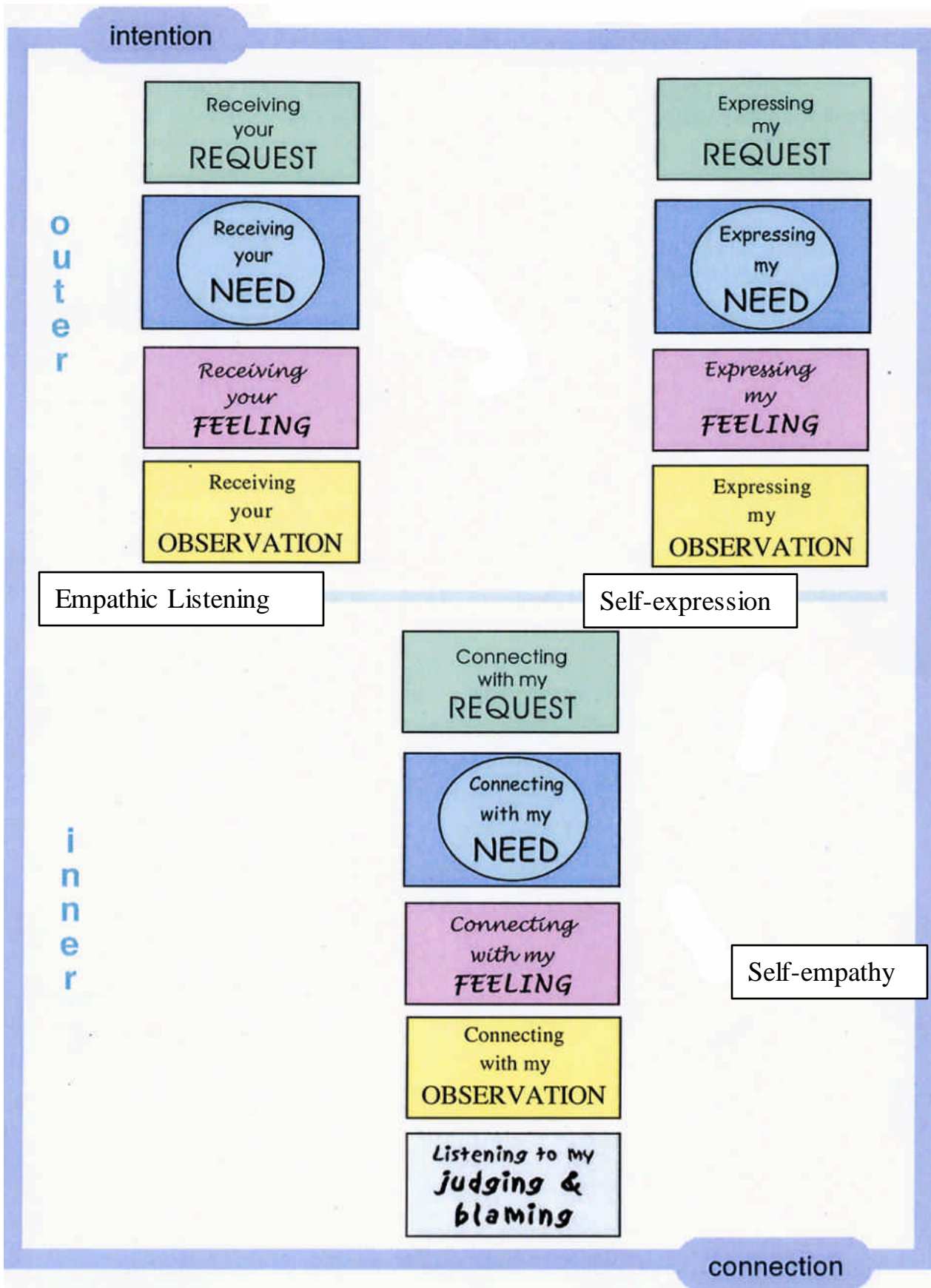
Go back and list the needs that were not getting met for each of the above

# Giraffe and Jackal Interactions

Perceived Sequence: Stimulus → Feeling → then either the Jackal or the Giraffe  
 Actual Sequence: Stimulus → Filter/Beliefs → Need → Feeling → then either the Jackal or the Giraffe  
 Jackal Response: Stimulus → Jackal Thoughts → Blame etc.  
 Giraffe Response: Stimulus → Filter/Beliefs → Need → Feeling → Need again (maybe through Jackal 1<sup>st</sup>) → Request



The Inner-Outer Dance  
13 Step Dance Floor



Reframe the content  
 Validate their experience  
 Reflect the emotion  
 Guess their feeling  
 Guess their need

# Reading Minds

## Three Compassionate Communication (NVC) Options

- Self-empathy
- Empathic listening
- Self expression

- ❖ The listener uses the feelings and needs list, while the speaker tells their story. The speaker thinks of some issue/conflict/problematic situation that is alive in them, but neither over the top, nor minor. It needs to be something specific – a chapter or a scene, not a novel. Too minor and the exercise ends without much learning.
- ❖ Give the speaker time – let them speak as much as possible. See common interruption tactics, and avoid them. At the same time, *do actively listen* (next point) and not just by way of non-verbal nods and expressions. Speaking can be listening too.
- ❖ Reframe statements, validate, and reflect the emotion as it seems appropriate. Ask clarifying questions as necessary to follow the story. You can break in and interrupt the speaker if clarity is really important right then for you, or you want to insert a guess (next point). Be clear about the story in your head, without inserting judgments. Look into their eyes specifically, not just their face. Keep that contact as much as possible.
- ❖ Guess feelings and needs, and keep track of which ones are correct. Always ask a specific question; never use statements.
  - If after three guesses you are still wrong, ask “can you tell me what you’re feeling/needing?”
  - Keep guesses framed positively – are you wanting/needing/wishing/longing for \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Guess one feeling or need at a time and find out if you’re right. Two can work, but harder to process for the teller.
  - Stay away from right or wrong thinking directed inwards or outwards. Guess feelings and needs. Not for feelings.
  - Each feeling is connected to an unmet need. You want to get all the unmet needs out there.
- ❖ While listening . . .
  - If the speaker seems to be saying the same thing over and over, listen carefully for ANYTHING different that you could reflect. Otherwise, just listen and repeat with them: “You really wanted it to be different.”
  - Match the energy of the speaker. Your guesses can be intense as well “Sounds like you’re REALLY wanting \_\_\_\_, yes?”
  - Keep guesses safe, and as you feel more comfortable, make guesses more and more bold. If you’re wrong a few times, stay with the speaker and keep the guesses safer again.
- ❖ When the speaker is done, and the feelings and needs seem complete, *allow 30-60 seconds of silence*. Do NOT ask, “Are you done yet?” Perhaps ask, “Is there more you want me to hear?” Keep the silence first.
- ❖ Recite the feelings and needs, and ask the speaker to identify the top three in each list.
- ❖ Refrain from problem-solving or strategy making before, during, or after, unless invited, and then only afterwards. That gets into Success Counseling. “I have a solution!” is deeply ingrained in us. We believe we have medicine for their pain, and we’re dying to give it to them! That may be possible, but fully empathize first. See Advice Giving elsewhere.

Feelings		Needs	



## Street Giraffe

Autonomy	You want to do your own thing? You want to do it your way? You want to be your own boss? You want the freedom to do it when you want to? You'd like to choose how you do it?
Identity	Do you want to try different things in order to figure out what you like?
Creativity	You want to explore and see where it takes you? You want to make something new?
Cooperation	Do you want everyone to work together?
Companionship	Would you like someone to spend hang out with more?
Affection	Do you want a hug?
Compassion	Do you want an ear to listen to what's going on?
Competence	You want to show people you can do it?
Honesty	You want to trust that what is said is really true?
Order	You want to find things easily? You want to know what's going on around you?
Support	You want some help?
Stimulation	Are you looking for something fun or new to do?
Ways to guess needs	Were you hoping _____? Would you have liked _____? And now you'd like _____? Were you wishing _____? Sounds as if you really wanted _____? I'm guessing you would have liked _____? Perhaps you would have preferred _____? I wonder if you'd like _____?
Ways to guess feelings	Sounds like you're feeling a bit _____? Seems as if you're feeling a sort of _____? I imagine you're feeling kind of _____? Maybe you're feeling somewhat _____? I wonder if you're feeling _____?

## Communication That Cuts Off the Connection

Advising	"I think you should . . ." "Why don't you . . ."
One upping	"That's nothing; wait'll you hear what happened to me!"
Educating	"This could turn in a very positive experience for you if you just . . ."
Consoling	"It wasn't your fault; you did the best you could." "Why would anyone do that to you?"
Story-telling	"That reminds me of the time . . ." "I know what you mean, it's just like when . . ."
Shutting down	"Cheer up. Don't feel so bad." "On the bright side, you still have . . ."
Sympathizing	"Oh, you poor thing . . ." "That's horrible that they did that to you."
Interrogating	"When did this happen?" "Who was it?"
Explaining	"I would have called but . . ."
Correcting	"That's not how it happened." "You mean last week."
Evaluation / judging	"Weird." "Crazy!" "Strange." "Stupid." "Fool, idiot, jerk" "What were they/you thinking?!" "That's outrageous!"

# Ahhhh, Gratitude...and NVC???

Thanks a Lot!

We've got a fever. And the only cure is more...*gratitude*? In our cultural obsession with creating high self-esteem in ourselves and our children, one of the many by-products is a dependency on being thanked and appreciated.\* Thanked for *everything*! And if we don't receive the gratitude we expect or think we deserve, judgments are heaped upon those ungrateful souls who have *dared* to overlook our generosity and/or accomplishment.

\*Important Clarification: If you've read the Educational Praise document, you will likely note some similarities to this page. While NVC Gratitude and Educational Praise certainly overlap in some areas, Educational Praise is more about providing perspective to folks that they were not aware of, where NVC Gratitude is more about telling folks how they have made life better for you.

Needless to say, gratitude and appreciation in our culture has lost a lot of its, ah, punch. In fact, many expressions of thanks and appreciation actually carry *judgment* within them. Consider that compliments are often judgments – however positive – of others.

- “You did a good job on the climbing wall.”
- “You canoed across the lake really quickly”
- “You were really funny in the improv skit tonight.”
- “It was kind of you to pick up my claim-jumping shift.”

None of these comments tell the other person what made life better for the speaker. All of the above examples establish the speaker as someone who sits in judgment. And in NVC, judgments – whether intended as positive or negative – reveal little about what is actually going on within the speaker, creating alienation from the person you are speaking to. Be aware, though, that it may not feel like alienation (“Hey, I love it when people tell me I'm funny!”).

Oh, great. All you want to do is just give someone a compliment, and now NVC is telling you that you are sitting in judgment. NVC is judging your judgment! But what's behind your gratitude/compliment/appreciation? What is it that you are hoping to acknowledge and express? The expression of gratitude in NVC takes 3 things into consideration:

- 1) The actions that have contributed to our well-being
- 2) The wonderful feelings created by the fulfillment of those needs
- 3) The particular needs of ours that have been fulfilled

Or, to put it another way:

## **Gratitude in NVC: What the heck am I trying to say?**

This is what you did; this is what I feel; this is the need of mine that was met.

In this light, let's see how the above examples might work with an NVC framework. Some of the below examples are more 'textbook' NVC (classical) for explanation purposes, and some have more natural, everyday language (street, see sidebar). In general, by leaving out the specific words “feeling” and “need” you are likely on the right track for being 'street.' Leaving out 'feeling' words can be helpful in creating connection with folks who may be allergic to 'feeling' words, or to the NVC concept in general. Below are examples of “judgmental compliments” (JC), with examples of how to describe the sentiment you may be feeling both in Classical Giraffe (CG) and Street Giraffe (SG) terms. Even some of the 'Street' examples may seem awkward if they use words you are not used to using. As you read the below examples, consider what vocabulary you might use to describe your thoughts:

- “You did a good job on the climbing wall.” (JC)
- “When you rang the bell at the top of the climbing wall, I was thankful, because it met my need for inspiration.” (CG)
- “I really appreciated your persistence on the climbing wall. You've inspired me to keep trying as well.” (SG)
- “You canoed across the lake really quickly” (JC)
- “When your canoe beat mine back to the dock, I felt refreshed, because it met my need for challenge.” (CG)
- “I was heka stoked after our canoe race, because I love to be challenged!” (SG)
- “You were really funny in the improv skit tonight.” (JC)
- “When you spoke in an Italian accent during the skit tonight, I felt delighted, because it met my need for play.” (CG)
- “When you said, “No, but that's a real nice ski mask!” in an Italian accent, I lost it. I'll be laughing myself to sleep tonight!” (SG)
- “It was kind of you to pick up my claim-jumping shift.” (JC)
- “I felt so much more relaxed when you picked up my claim-jumping shift, as it really met my need for support.” (CG)
- “I was *really* struggling to come up with Wood Cookie ideas. I appreciate you picking up my shift...it gave me the freedom I needed to chat with my VL about ideas.” (SG)

Sure, sometimes all of the above considerations (observation, feeling, and need) can be conveyed by a simple smile or a “Thank You.” Ask yourself: what did someone say or do that made life more wonderful for me? Can it be conveyed with a smile, or would more detail allow me to reveal myself more, and ultimately create a greater connection with the person who has made my life more wonderful? Often the answers to these questions depend on how well you already know a person, and what your level of connection is with them.

Lastly, a note on receiving gratitude. Often, we tend to receive it from one of two polar positions. One is egotism: we're superior because we've been appreciated. The other is false humility, denying the importance of the appreciation and shrugging it off. NVC encourages us to receive appreciation with the same quality of empathy we express when listening to others; be aware of your feelings and needs when receiving gratitude from someone else. When we hear how we have made life wonderful for someone else, we recognize the enormous power and potential that we have to improve the quality of others' lives.

“Gratitude is when memory is stored in the heart and not in the mind.” -Lionel Hampton



# The Enemy Image



How do you see those with whom you disagree?

*“That person is completely unreasonable. Their values and philosophies are so different from mine that there is no way we could ever find common ground. Their words and actions are not genuine. Insert your own judgments here \_\_\_\_\_.”*

Let’s be honest...the above thoughts have crossed all of our minds at some point. We get a picture in our mind of a person, or a group of people, who are so different from us that they come to represent “The Enemy.” The enemy image is often discussed in descriptions of war, where young men and women on a battlefield kill people they don’t know. They create an image of an enemy that is so bad and so dehumanized that they no longer need to treat that enemy with decency or reverence for life. An image has been created whereby the humans on the other side of the battlefield are now lesser than them.

War is an extreme example. Yet we often create enemy images of people we encounter in our daily lives who think and/or act differently from us. It is no different at Camp Augusta. Our community is home to a variety of personalities, races, genders, sexual orientations, classes, ethnicities, and any other categorization that you can think of. There will be people here that you do not see eye-to-eye with. There will be people here who will downright piss you off. You may also find that some of camp’s philosophies or values do not sit well with you. In short, you will at some point find yourself in disagreement with our community.

You are then presented with a choice. How do you choose to portray those with whom you disagree? Do you choose to see them as enemies? As people so corrupt or unreasonable that they are not worth trying to connect with? Or do you choose to see them as humans, as people just like you, who have their own strategies in life, and their own feelings of happiness, sadness, anger, and love, just like you? Although it’s useful to think about those whom you disagree with in black-and-white terms (enemy or not?), shades of gray are far more common. We frequently categorize people, saying, “I love x, y, and z about them, and consider them a friend, but...” When you allow the thoughts that come after that “but” to remain, and choose not to work through them, then you’ve got an enemy image. There is a huge continuum that you may put people on, with varying severities of “buts.” The trick is not to fall into creating enemy images of folks, regardless of where they fall on the continuum (it is possible to create enemy images of people with whom you barely disagree with).

Here are some examples of past enemy images that were held at Camp Augusta, and also the strategies, feelings, and needs on the other side of the “battlefield” from those enemy images.

<u>Past Enemy Images at Camp Augusta</u>	<u>Other Explanations for the Same Situations</u>
By serving food with meat in it, camp is ignoring the negative ecological impacts of meat production	By serving meat, camp has access to a wider variety of children (most folks in the US eat meat), allowing us opportunities to discuss environmental impacts with folks who otherwise may not be exposed to such discussions
The Program Directors use NVC in a coercive way, to achieve pre-determined ends	Folks in leadership roles are not masters of NVC. And/or, discussions to hold themselves accountable to agreed-upon values and philosophies can be seen as working to clarify intentions and agreements
We always have to have more and newer clinics and things. This is materialism. Where does it end?	A unique and diverse program selection creates possibilities and freedom for children to explore areas of themselves they would otherwise not. Also, as the Camp Augusta clinic offerings mature, and the camp matures as well (we are still very young), the number of new clinics will decrease, with a focus on quality thereafter.
Foam weapons: there is no value in teaching battle	Sword fighting provides an opportunity for us to have a unique physical activity, and use it to teach emotional regulation. Sword lessons are disciplined and skill-oriented, like a martial art, and honorable and dishonorable contests are distinguished.
The schedule is too hectic. There is no way we can be healthy and inspired with a schedule like we’ve got.	Plenty of information is provided pre-camp giving perspective on our schedule. As well, there are other camps with even more intense schedules and less comforts (Trail Blazers, for example), yet those staff have found enjoyment and peace with their schedule.

When we choose to believe judgments about other people or groups of people, we are creating separation. At that point of separation, a line has been drawn where we deny any possibility for connection. Ideas of separation, where people are *just different* from other people, are root causes of violence – verbal, social, and physical. Creating separation is intentional, and a choice...it means you are choosing to look at a situation in which you create ‘sides’ of people on one end of an argument. Reaching this point usually comes with resignation and anger, and a sense that you don’t even want to talk to that group/person anymore, because it won’t do any good. If you find yourself at this point, consider your thoughts within this framework:

1. Validate your own experience – it’s okay to have the feelings you are having! Even if they are anger, frustration, or resentment...
2. Reflect on what’s important to you. What issues are you concerned about? What are your needs in this moment?
3. Consider the community/other person, and remember that there is a strategy behind their actions. What might their intentions be underneath the actions I am reacting to?
4. What possibilities and/or action steps exist for addressing what’s important to me, and to those I am concerned with? At Camp Augusta, plenty of options and processes are available to us for moving forward (see Consensus, NVC, Stories, Rackets, and Clean Communication).

As can be seen (hopefully!), what was an enemy image to one person can actually be met with a reasonable conversation...*as long as that conversation is given the opportunity to happen*. Folks may still disagree at the end of the discussion, but there is real possibility for understanding and shared action when those disagreements are met with compassion and empathy. Through NVC we learn that all humans have *universal* feelings and needs. My feelings and needs are your feelings and needs, allowing us to see ourselves in each other. If we choose to create an enemy image of someone we disagree with, we have lost an opportunity to connect. In closing that door to someone else – *someone who is just like us* – we have also closed a door into our own heart. Compassion and empathy are available to us, and ours to live into. That choice is ours.

# Needs and Wants, Camp Augusta Style

I want Cookies, because I need Satisfaction. That's NVC, right?

## Needs and Wants: What are They?

**Needs:** Human requirements to provide for our survival, health, and well-being

**Wants:** Desires to meet those needs

In NVC we are taught that all humans have *universal* feelings and needs...that my needs are the same as yours, and that we all work to meet our needs to provide for our survival, health, and well-being. "Wants" represent desires, of varying degree and intensity, to meet those needs. These wants *may* give rise to strategies, which guide our actions as we work to meet our needs. Wants may also give rise to no action at all. For example, we may want to buy a plane ticket to Hawaii to meet a need for freedom, but there may be more accessible ways for us to meet that need for freedom without going to Hawaii, or other needs may take priority over the need for freedom, and so we do nothing.

To sum: Needs give rise to wants, and wants may or may not give rise to strategies to meet those needs. It may also be helpful to think of wants as avenues, or paths, to meet needs...but that doesn't mean that you will necessarily walk down each of those paths. Here's some algebra for further clarification: Need X, Want Y, *sometimes* Via Z (where Z represents a strategy; remember, just because you want something doesn't mean you will strategize to get it).

## Meeting Our Needs in Alignment with our Values

So, what determines whether or not we act on our needs and wants? Many things, including our upbringing, our values, stages in life, and the community we live in. Once our basic needs are met (like food, water and shelter), we frequently seek to meet our needs in accordance with our values (things like freedom, creativity, and fun). Even our most basic needs are still often met in alignment with certain values, if we have the means. For example, at Camp Augusta, food (a very basic need) is preferred to be whole, organic, and local, and water is preferred to not come from plastic jugs and bottles, meeting needs for health and safety.

## Need Shifting

Even though our values help determine the strategies we use to meet our needs, our needs often change quite quickly. This is known as 'need shifting.' You may really enjoy meeting certain needs for freedom and self-expression which are more available to you in your mid-20s. Yet a romantic interest may enter your life, and inspire you to place more importance on connection and sharing life's joys with another person, causing you to place less value on raw freedom. Or, in your 40s, you may place high importance on meeting needs for order and financial stability. Yet you may have a parent who gets sick and needs lots of attention and care, and your values compel you to be there for them, meeting a need you have for service...your money may soon be going to support your parent, and your schedule will likely change drastically. Your needs have shifted. For perspective, consider that some needs may be more present/important during certain periods of your life than during others:

### Young Child

Food  
Security  
Shelter

### Teen

Freedom  
Acceptance  
Meaning

### Camp Counselor

Creativity  
Contribution  
Fun

### Senior Citizen

Support  
Rest  
Laughter

Sure, when you are a senior citizen, you might still have a *need* for freedom. But the way that need can be met will likely be much more limited than when you were a teen or a camp counselor; as a senior citizen, the strategies for meeting your need for freedom are much more difficult to envision, and may not be possible to you at all. Your physical body will not support the freedoms that you may have enjoyed at one time. You are left here with a big-picture choice: be bitter about the freedoms that are no longer available to you, or shift your needs and embrace what is available to you. (see Your Storied Life!)

## Need Shifting: Joy and Mourning

*A note on need shifting:* need shifting does not have to come with strife or unrest. It can be a peaceful process of joy for, and acceptance of, the new opportunities available to you to meet other needs. Of course, there may also be some loss associated with need shifting. Something that you really enjoy, and that meets highly-valued needs of yours, may no longer be available to you. For example, making frequent phone calls and writing many letters to your closest friends may fulfill your needs for connection and harmony in the 'real world'. Yet, at camp, the nature of our schedule will likely not leave you with the time and flexibility you normally enjoy to make those calls and write those letters. There may be some regret associated with this reality, and mourning will likely accompany that loss. Mourning, in NVC, means taking the time to get in touch with your feelings and needs, and to 'be' with those feelings without trying to fix them or immediately meet them with requests of yourself or others. In mourning, you shift your mind away from the habit of trying to solve things that it cannot solve. Giving yourself the 'permission' and space to recognize your unmet needs, without judging yourself or others for not meeting those needs, opens your heart to *what is* available to you. It is possible to treasure the needs that we are unable to meet without discounting them, while healing in their absence.

## Community Needs vs. Individual Needs

At Camp Augusta there is a balance between community needs and individual needs. The gray area that exists between the community and the individual will naturally produce differing wants, which may sometimes ask us to shift our own needs. With the exception of very basic needs like food, water, and sleep, those need differences between the community and the individual are moderated by shared values and, if still unsure, further communication (see Clean Communication, NVC, and Consensus documents!). The world of wants at camp is sometimes shadier (cue sinister music). Even though wants are seeking to meet certain needs, there are often needs and wants that fall further down on the priority list (see below for needs and priorities) Though we often think of wants as applying more to individuals, there could also be community wants: the entire community could want chocolate cake for every meal (we need happiness, and chocolate makes us happy!), yet that want does not uphold the community's value of providing healthy, nutritious meals to campers and staff. In this case, the community's values are held to be more important than the community's want, as there are other ways to meet the community need for happiness that do not conflict with community values.

## Need Shifting at Camp

Likewise at camp, certain needs may be more present for you here than during other times of your life, while other needs that you meet in 'the real world' may be more difficult for you to meet here...your needs will likely shift at Camp Augusta. You may still find ways to meet these needs (like the senior citizen may find ways to maximize freedom) but it will likely be in a different form than what you are used to. Community needs and wants are also very visible at camp. Navigating the world between community and individual needs and wants contains significant gray area, though we have guidelines to help us move through those waters skillfully (see Support at Camp!) Here are some examples of common community and individual needs with levels of priority that are compatible with our values and philosophies at Camp Augusta:

### Community Needs (Higher Priority)

Keeping Agreements (with shared values)  
Service (at the core of our mission)  
Openness (see all communication documents)

### Community Needs (Lower Priority)

Learning New Skills (new clinics)  
Order (140 people in shared spaces!)  
Comfort (some improved facilities would be nice)

### Individual Needs (Higher Priority)

Rest (demanding schedule)  
Expression (lots of teaching and mentoring)  
Honesty (giving and receiving feedback)

### Individual Needs (Lower Priority)

Connection (with folks outside of camp)  
Privacy (shared spaces don't allow for much)  
Stability (an ever-changing schedule)

As you'll notice, the 'Lower Priority' needs are still valid and important, and will likely give rise to some pretty strong wants. Yet you have a choice in how you choose to prioritize those needs and wants. As we ask on the Secret Page, is your praise vessel a bucket or a small glass? And, the same can be asked here: How many wants are you coming to camp with...a bucketful or a small glass? As usual at Camp Augusta, things are not black-and-white. Needs may be universal, but we also must consider the community as well as the individual in this picture, in light of our values. There is lots of room in between, to be navigated by our shared values, our communication tools, and our commitment to the people who have brought us together in the first place: children.

In short:

## **Got Some Needs, Got Some Wants**

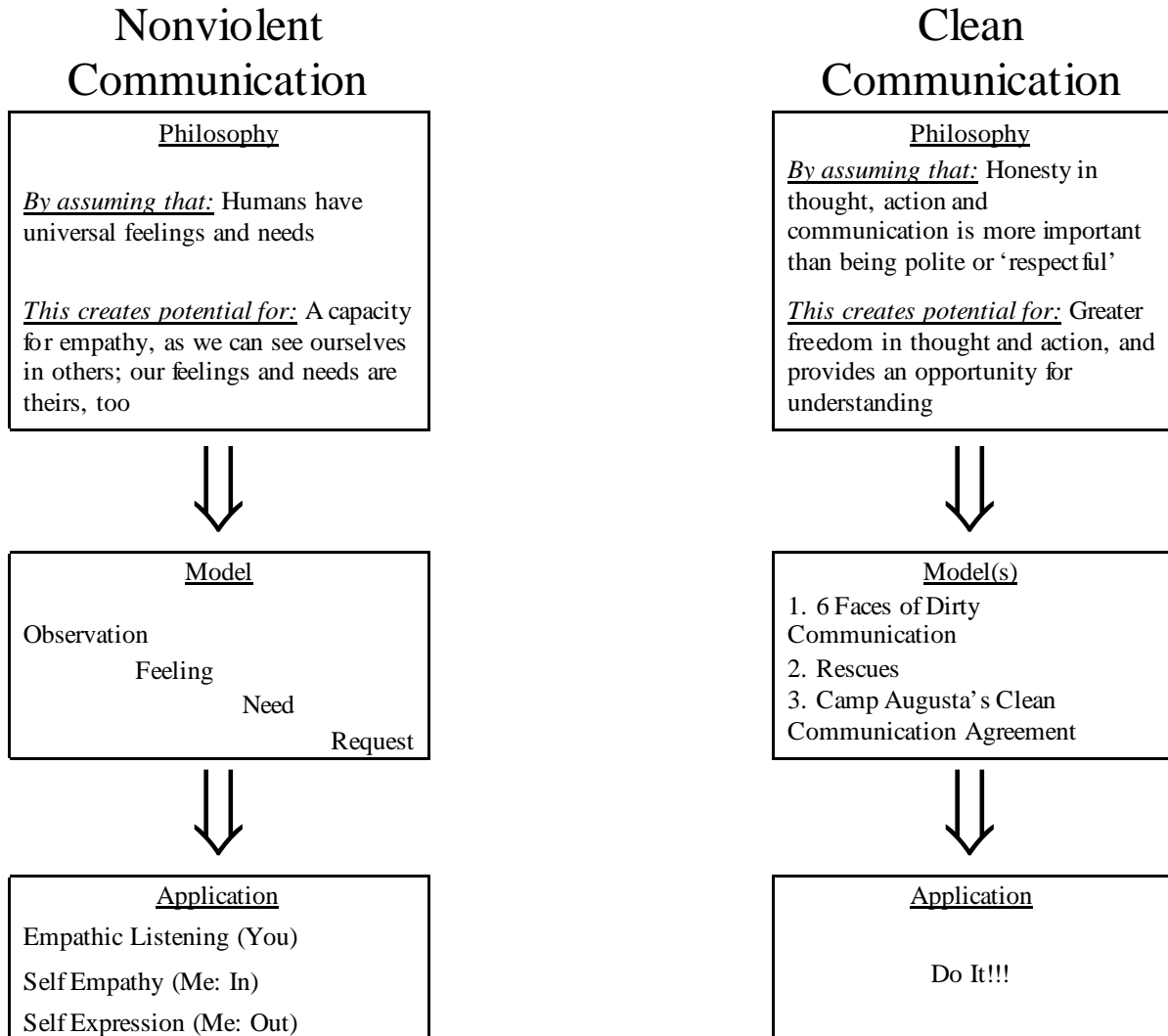
- Needs give rise to wants, and wants may or may not give rise to strategies to meet those needs  
Need X, Want Y, *sometimes* Via Z (where Z represents a strategy)
- We seek to meet our needs in accordance with our values
- Our needs often change quickly, known as 'need shifting'
- Both joy and mourning *may* accompany need shifting
- Community needs and individual needs can differ in priority. These differences are moderated by shared values and, if still unsure, further communication
- At camp, certain needs may be more present for you here than during other times of your life. Your needs will likely shift at Camp Augusta

**How many wants are you coming to camp with?**

# Clean Communication and NVC

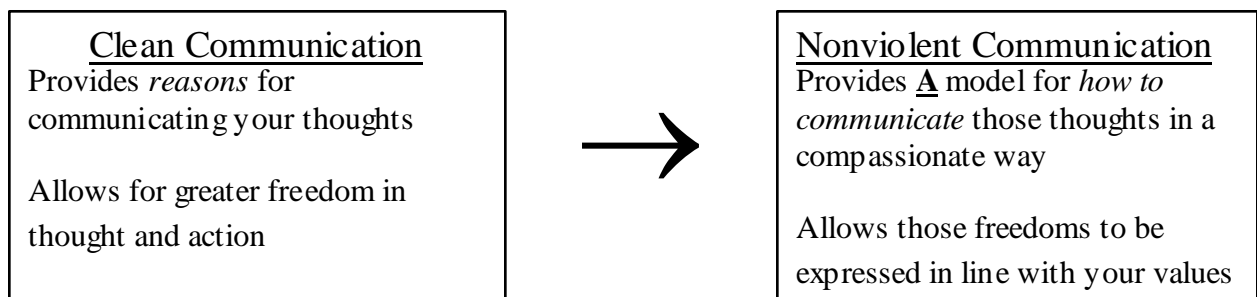
Tools for Creating a Healthy Community

How are they different, and how do they work together?



As noted in other communication documents, many of the techniques and models that we use at Camp Augusta are *tools and guidelines*. There is not an approach that will work in all circumstances, 100% of the time.

Some folks have wondered about how to reconcile some Clean Communication concepts with those of NVC. There is not a cut-and-paste process that will unite the various tools and concepts into a single vision (again, though we will continue our striving towards utopia, there is not (yet) a tool that will work in all circumstances). But here is a general guideline that puts Clean Communication and NVC into perspective with each other.



# Evaluations Masquerading as Feelings

## Differentiating between feelings and evaluations of what others are doing

Adapted from Ike Lasater, "Words at Work" <http://wordsthatwork.us/site/>

"As an example, when I say, 'I feel criticized by you,' I am telling you my interpretation of your conduct. And further, I am probably suggesting you are doing something to me with a connotation of wrongness or blame." You shouldn't be doing that to me!

This document is an elaboration of "Faux Feelings." A more powerful and peaceful approach owns my feelings as my own. Instead of "you did this (feeling) to me," the sentiment is "this is how **I** am feeling." Speak to one's own experiences and observations, and not about another's. I own my state, taking full responsibility for it. Certainly, the actions of others are fodder for what we feel, as a result of a need being met or unmet (see NVC heart graphic in manual).

When you say these words:	What might you be feeling?	What might you be needing?
Abandoned	Terrified, hurt, bewildered, sad, frightened, lonely	Nurturing, connection, belonging, support, caring
Abused	Angry, frustrated, frightened, physical pain	Caring, nurturing, support, emotional or physical wellbeing, consideration, need for all living things to flourish
Attacked	Scared, angry, physical pain	Safety
Belittled	Angry, frustrated, tense, distressed	Respect, autonomy, to be seen, acknowledgment, appreciation
Betrayed	Angry, hurt, disappointed, enraged	Trust, dependability, honesty, honor, commitment, clarity
Blamed	Angry, scared, confused, antagonistic, hostile, bewildered, hurt	Accountability, causality, fairness, justice, seen for your intentions
Cheated	Resentful, hurt, angry	Honesty, fairness, justice, trust, reliability
Coerced	Angry, frustrated, frightened, thwarted, scared	Choice, autonomy, freedom, act freely, choose freely
Cornered	Angry, scared, anxious, thwarted	Autonomy, freedom
Criticized	In pain, scared, anxious, frustrated, humiliated, angry, embarrassed	Understanding, acknowledgement, recognition, accountability, non-judgmental communication
Harassed	Angry, frustrated, pressured, frightened	Respect, space, consideration, peace
Hassled	Irritated, distressed, angry, frustrated,	Serenity, autonomy, do things at my own pace and in my own way, calm, space
Ignored	Lonely, scared, hurt, sad, embarrassed	Connection, belonging, inclusion, community, participation, to be heard and seen
Insulted	Angry, embarrassed	Respect, consideration, acknowledgement, recognition
Intimidated	Scared, anxiety	Safety, equality, empowerment
Isolated	Lonely, afraid, scared	Community, inclusion, belonging, contribution
Left out	Sad, lonely, anxious	Inclusion, belonging, community, connection

Let down	Sad, disappointed, frightened	Consistency, trust, dependability, consistency (ha ha)
Manipulated	Angry, scared, powerless, thwarted, frustrated	Autonomy, empowerment, trust, equality, freedom, free choice, connection, genuineness
Misunderstood	Upset, angry, frustrated	To be heard, understanding, clarity, to be seen for your intentions
Neglected	Lonely, scared	Connection, inclusion, participation, community, care, mattering, consideration
Pressured	Anxious, resentful, overwhelmed	Relaxation, clarity, space, consideration
Provoked	Angry, frustrated, hostile, antagonistic, resentful	Respect, consideration
Put down	Angry, sad, embarrassed	Respect, acknowledgment, understanding
Rejected	Hurt, scared, angry, defiant	Belonging, inclusion, closeness, to be seen, acknowledgment, connection
Ripped off! Screwed	Anger, resentment, disappointment	Consideration, justice, fairness, justice acknowledgment, trust
Smothered/ suffocated	Frustrated, fear, desperation	Space, freedom, autonomy, authenticity, self expression
Taken for granted	Sad, angry, hurt, disappointment	Appreciation, acknowledgment, recognition, consideration
Threatened	Scared, frightened, alarmed, agitated, defiant	Safety, autonomy
Unappreciated	Sad, angry, hurt, frustrated	Appreciation, respect, acknowledgment, consideration
Unheard	Sad, hostile, frustrated	Understanding, consideration, empathy
Unloved	Sad, bewildered, frustrated, lonely	Love, appreciation, empathy, connection, community
Unsupported	Sad, hurt, resentful	Support, understanding
Used	Sad, angry, resentful	Autonomy, equality, consideration, mutuality
Victimized	Frightened, helpless	Empowerment, mutuality, safety, justice
Violated	Sad, agitated, anxiety	Privacy, safety, trust, space, respect
Wronged	Angry, hurt, resentful, irritated	Respect, justice, trust, safety, fairness, to be seen for your intentions

### Jackal You?!?, Nah, I'll Jackal Myself!

Stupid, ashamed, embarrassed, awkward, worthless, lost, etc. These are evaluations of oneself, and since by oneself, they are a clever use of “Enemy Images” and “Rackets” applied inward to the self! In essence, “shoulding” on oneself. Cool, low self-esteem defined. What to do? See “Dancing right along” below followed with this self-frame in mind. You’re likely going to need an empathy buddy (not enabling buddy); find the best one you can. Read the Desiderata. Peace.

### Through the looking glass

Now, flip your perspective; instead of imagining yourself saying/thinking/feeling from an evaluative perspective, imagine that you are on the receiving end of those words . . . what kind of situations might bring on those sentiments? Such imaginative empathy can finetune one’s senses for a resulting/future conversation.



### Three closely related tricky word sets

Power is a “bucket” word, meaning that it holds feelings and needs that are closer to the core of what is happening. Think about it in terms of money (which is a kind of power); money can buy you food, but it isn't food itself.

Respect . . . on a street, giraffe level, it has use, as does the edgier “disrespected” if heard with giraffe ears. I enjoy the clarifying question “If you had respect, what else would you have?” That question unpacks the bucket word.

4-ish letter words, words like “happy” and even “elated,” are an attempt at sharing what is alive in you, but muffled.

### “How come there aren't positive evaluations as well?”

Okay, hang tight here Peeps! “Positive” and “Negative” are alien brain control! Break free! How? Evaluations are not beneficial in either case, as the act of evaluating places the control/responsibility/power outside of oneself. Zap! Powerless! It is a very subtle difference . . . expressing how you feel, and that someone made you feel a given way, is a critical nuance that harkens to other philosophies as well, like “Your Storied Life.” If someone made you feel a given way, you don't have the power/choice. Check this out:

Feeling	= YOU	→(interpretation)→	OTHER	E.g. = “I feel supported”
Evaluation	= OTHER	→(caused) →	YOU	E.g. = “I feel supported”

“Dude! You're messing with my brain!” Yes, the examples are the same, because it is the INTENTION behind the words that determines if they are beneficial or evaluative. With an evaluation, something happened to you. The alternative is to take the data/“story” of “what happened,” and CHOOSE your feeling. Poof, no more alien brain control! Check out “Ah, Gratitude” in the manual for sharing powerful expressions of what is wholly alive in you.

### Peace . . . Out.

Once someone has felt heard and understood (through “Reading Minds” for example), that is often as far as the path need be traveled. “Solutions” and your own self-expression may add water to a glass that is already full and complete, creating a mess. :-)

### Dancing right along

Knowing where you are on the dance floor (in manual) is critical. Expressing evaluative statements is in the Jackal self-expression square. When you're unbalanced (needing empathy), expressions are unlikely to go well . . . perhaps looking to spawn guilt, co-dependency, anger (another bucket word), compliance, acquiescence, or even empathy. **“When people need empathy the most, they are likely to ask for it in a way they are least likely to receive it.”** - Marshall Rosenberg, Ph.D.

So what do you do when you receive evaluative remarks? Use the “Reading Minds” (in manual) process to get at the core of what is going on for the person; take the daggers, turn them into flowers, and hand them back a bouquet. When the appropriate time for requests arrives (if there are any), a simple round of NVC requests may quickly resolve the issue. When that doesn't occur, and folks are well balanced, moving into Success Counseling offers a positive path forward.

# Ahem! What About Me?

## The Illusion of Getting Your Needs Met

### You and Your Needs

Be honest. How often do you expect to have your needs met? Hmmm? Consider your day yesterday. What needs did you have? Did they get met? Go on, flip to the introductory pages on NVC in this Staff Manual...the pages with the charts of needs and feelings. Be sure not to dwell only on the more obvious "Subsistence" needs, and consider some of the other needs that stick out as being important to you. Pick 10 needs, and feel free to write them down here. Go ahead, no one's looking.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Now, how many of those were met? And, if they were met, were they met with the kind of quality and intentionality that you like? For example, take a very basic need like food: it's likely that you ate yesterday, but was it healthy, sustaining and fulfilling, with care put into its creation?

Or perhaps you noted a need like connection. Were the interactions you had with folks yesterday connected and compassionate? Did you feel heard and understood, and did you feel like you also heard and understood the folks you were attempting to connect with? Could those connections have been more fulfilling?

What about needs for self-care, space, and leisure, such as reading, watching a movie, exercising, and/or sleeping 8+ hours a night?

### Satisfied?

Perhaps you are wondering why you are being grilled about your needs from yesterday...perhaps it's even fair to say that you've got a need for clarity that is going unmet right now? ☺ Here's the rub: when our needs go unmet, or when they are not met in the particular way that we wish for them to be met, there is often a shock/sadness/disbelief/anger that occurs. We become upset because *our needs* are not being met in the way that we would like for them to be met, and a whole range of bummed-out feelings follow, including fear, anxiety, frustration, and even grief.

Asking those of us who live in the United States how often, on a normal and balanced day, we expect to get our needs met, and the answer is likely to be a very high percentage of the time. Yet when that is dissected, and the needs and their fulfillment are analyzed more closely, it's easy to see that our *expectations* for need-meeting are often far from the *realities* of need-meeting.

Consider New Year's Resolutions. Every year on January 1st, millions of people resolve to exercise, eat healthy, and shed some pounds. And every year, the majority of those people fail at their goal. Folks don't expect to fail when they embark on these resolutions, yet they do, over and over again, and are often quite unhappy about it. (Not completely relevant, and without delving too much into the American psyche, it's fascinating to consider the resilience or insanity [depends on your perspective] of folks who make these new resolutions every year, embarking on the same journey that they failed at only a few months ago.)

It's no wonder so many of us are unhappy so much of the time! Consider this for reflection:

$$\text{Satisfaction} = \text{Reality} - \text{Expectations}$$

Satisfaction translates nicely as getting your needs met. So when you expect your needs to be met more often than they are in reality, or in a way that is unexpected, you will end up dissatisfied much of the time. And you have much more control over your expectations than you do over what happens to you. If you can't change reality (pretty difficult!), consider what you are *expecting* from reality, and how your needs and strategies for meeting those needs impact your level of satisfaction in your life.

Being aware of which needs you want to have met, and which needs are actually available for you to meet in the way that you'd like, gives you a greater capacity for satisfaction by adjusting your expectations accordingly. You may want to meet a need for belonging through a specific strategy of trying to join a certain group...that would *satisfy* you. But if your skills are not of the quality the group wants, or maybe they simply don't like you, that *reality* would make it quite difficult for you to meet that need with that particular strategy! Your *expectation* around that need and the strategy you employed is what is immediately within your control, and will contribute directly to your level of satisfaction.

### (The Caveats)

(Of course, nearly everything we talk about at Camp Augusta occurs on a spectrum, and this topic is no different. It's important to point out that, taken to an extreme, trying to let go of all expectations/wants/desires can render you quite powerless: "Oh, ha ha, that's me not getting my need met again! Oh well, that happens, time to get over it." One can get walked on by others, and by life in general, with that perspective. More on distinguishing between what you want, and how you respond to getting it or not getting it, is below. There is always a balance to be on the lookout for...

...Another spectrum to consider is the *size and severity* of needs. Tragedies such as natural disasters, freak accidents, the death of friends and family members, etc., are real, important, and difficult to experience. It is not reasonable to expect that one's needs will shift quickly in response to trauma and tragedy; grieving, support, and space are natural and necessary components to healing. The balance to keep in mind is that folks frequently take smaller events/needs, and turn them into massive dramas that are distorted in relationship to other needs; these "everyday" needs and dramas, not tragedies, are the focus of this piece. )

### Deserving?

If we look more closely at our expectations, we'll notice that there is often an element of *deserving* in there. When we feel deserving of something, we tend to feel that we should have it...and we all know what happens when that s-word comes into the picture. A judgment is formed if we do not receive what we deserve.

Deserving also distorts our picture of reality. When we do not receive something we believe we deserve, we have a difficult time accepting that, because deserving prompts us to say: "what is" (reality) *should not be* how it is if we don't receive that which is owed to us. Deserving creates an expectation grounded in judgment. Yikes!

It may also be helpful to consider "deserving" in light of the high self-esteem movement, of which we remember the consequences from the lovely videos we've all watched. When we're constantly told that we are the bomb, we come to expect/deserve plenty of other good things to come our way.

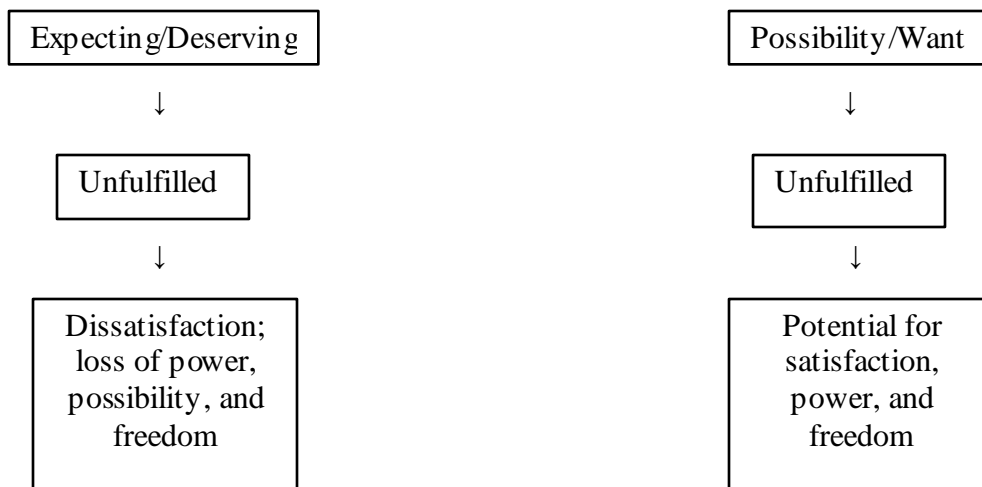
### Satisfied!

So, what to do? There is an entire document in the Staff Manual on Need Shifting, which provides some perspective here. As well, see the 8-Fold Path, Mystery Needs, Your Storied Life, Asking for Your 100%, and Speaking with Peace for further perspective.

There is also particular joy that can come from a shift in your perspective to see community needs as your own needs, and thus being satisfied through the joy of service.

*I slept and dreamt that life was pleasure, I woke and saw that life was service, I served and discovered that service was pleasure.*  
Rabindranath Tagore

It's also worth considering the language used when considering your needs. When expecting something, your options are limited depending on the outcome; not receiving what you expect will leave you feeling dissatisfied. Rather, by leaving open the possibility of getting what you want, and even *really* wanting it, there's an understanding that you may not get it; this understanding allows for more space and freedom around the outcome, and the possibility for pursuing a different strategy to get the need met. Here's how the two approaches look:



Lastly, where we choose to focus our attention has a great effect on how we perceive whether or not our needs getting met, and our response to those perceptions. In the exercise at the very beginning of this piece, where you thought back on your needs from the previous day, it's highly likely that you focused more on the needs that did *not* get met. The needs that we notice the most are often those that are going unmet. Expanding your thinking to see what is possible and available to you, and to see what needs are in fact getting met in meaningful ways, will create greater satisfaction and freedom in your thoughts and interactions.

When the gap between reality and expectations begins to fall away, you will be less likely to be surprised and dissatisfied when your needs go unmet. Instead, you can begin to focus more of your time and attention on that which is meaningful and available to you, creating, as Johnny Cash might say, a satisfied mind.

How many times have  
You heard someone say  
If I had his money  
I could do things my way

But little they know  
That it's so hard to find  
One rich man in ten  
With a satisfied mind

Once I was waitin'  
In fortune and fame  
Everything that I dreamed for  
To get a start in life's game

Then suddenly it happened  
I lost every dime  
But I'm richer by far  
With a satisfied mind

Money can't buy back  
Your youth when you're old  
Or a friend when you're lonely  
Or a love that's grown cold

The wealthiest person  
Is a pauper at times  
Compared to the man  
With a satisfied mind

When my life has ended  
And my time has run out  
My friends and my loved ones  
I'll leave there's no doubt

But one thing's for certain  
When it comes my time  
I'll leave this old world  
With a satisfied mind

How many times have  
You heard someone say  
If I had his money  
I could do things my way

But little they know  
That it's so hard to find  
One rich man in ten  
With a satisfied mind

-Johnny Cash, *Satisfied Mind*