

Nonviolent Communication^(sm)

Introductory Reference materials

(full version)



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NVC email groups (learning & connection)

www.cnvc.org

www.groups.yahoo.com (search under "nonviolent communication" to find scores of groups)

Website for NVC publications

www.nonviolentcommunication.com

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Table of Contents

Nonviolent Communication Quick Reference Guide	3
Key Assumptions and Intentions of NVC	4
Basics of Nonviolent Communication	6
Feelings/Emotions - Partial List	12
Universal Human Needs - Partial List	14
Colloquial Expression of Needs	15
Sample Connection Requests	15

Nonviolent Communication Quick Reference Guide

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

Observations: Description of what is seen or heard without added interpretations. For example, ^{w/out} instead of "She's having a temper tantrum," you could say "She is lying on the floor crying and kicking." ^{yourself/out} 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 Intentions of NVC

I. Assumptions Underlying the Practice of Nonviolent Communication

Following are key assumptions that NVC practice is based on. Many traditions share these assumptions; NVC gives us concrete, powerful tools for putting them into practice. When we live based on these assumptions, self-connection and connection with others become increasingly possible and easy.

1. **All human beings share the same needs:** We all have the same needs, although the strategies we use to meet these needs may differ. Conflict occurs at the level of strategies, not at the level of needs. What we refer to as cultural differences are differences in strategies to meet needs, not in the needs themselves.
2. **Our world offers sufficient resources for meeting everyone's basic needs:** The scarcity experienced by so many people arises because we have not designed our social structures to meet everyone's needs. We can attribute any apparent scarcity to a current systemic limitation, a crisis of imagination, or a lack of skills for fostering connection. *"PLENTY" We can design our social structures to meet everyone's need.*
3. **All actions are attempts to meet needs:** Our desire to meet needs, whether conscious or unconscious, underlies every action we take. We only resort to violence or other actions that do not meet our own or others' needs when we do not recognize more effective strategies for meeting needs.
4. **Feelings point to needs being met or unmet:** Our feelings arise directly out of our experience of our needs, whether these seem to us met or unmet in a given circumstance. Feelings may be triggered but not caused by others. When our needs are met, we feel happy, satisfied, peaceful, etc. When our needs are not met, we feel sad, scared, angry, etc. Our assessment of whether or not our needs are met almost invariably involves an interpretation or belief.
5. **All human beings have the capacity for compassion:** We have an innate capacity for compassion, though not always the knowledge of how to access it. When we are met with compassion and respect for our autonomy, we tend to have more access to our own compassion for ourselves and for others. Growing compassion contributes directly to our capacity to meet needs peacefully.
6. **Human beings enjoy giving:** We inherently enjoy contributing to others when we have connected with our own and others' needs and can experience our giving as coming from choice.
7. **Human beings meet needs through interdependent relationships:** We meet nearly all our needs, except those having to do with our relationships with ourselves and nature, through our relationships with other people. When others' needs are not met, some needs of our own also remain unmet, such as peace, connection, harmony, contribution, etc.
8. **Choice is internal:** Regardless of the circumstances, we can meet our need for autonomy by making conscious choices based on awareness of needs.
9. **The most direct path to peace is through self-connection:** Our capacity for peace is not dependent on having our needs met. Even when many needs are unmet, meeting our need for self-connection can be sufficient for inner peace.

The problem is not out there

I CHOOSE

II. Key Intentions when Using Nonviolent Communication

We hold the following intentions when using NVC because we believe that they help us contribute to a world where everyone's needs are attended to peacefully.

Open-Hearted Living

1. **Self-compassion:** We aim to release all self-blame, self-judgments, and self-demands, and meet ourselves with compassion and understanding for the needs we try to meet through all our actions.
2. **Expressing from the heart:** When expressing ourselves, we aim to speak from the heart, expressing our feelings and needs, and making specific, do-able requests.
3. **Receiving with compassion:** When we hear others, we aim to hear the feelings and needs behind their expressions and actions, regardless of how they express themselves, even if their expression or actions do not meet our needs (e.g. judgments, demands, physical violence).
4. **Prioritizing connection:** We aim to focus on connecting open-heartedly with everyone's needs instead of seeking immediate and potentially compromised solutions, especially in challenging situations.
5. **Beyond "right" and "wrong":** We aim to transform our habit of making "right" and "wrong" assessments (moralistic judgments), and to focus instead on whether or not human needs appear met (need-based assessments).

Choice, Responsibility, Peace

6. **Taking responsibility for our feelings:** We aim to connect our feelings to our own needs, recognizing that others do not have the power to make us feel anything. This recognition empowers us to take action to meet our needs instead of waiting for others to change.
7. **Taking responsibility for our actions:** We aim to recognize our choice in each moment, and take actions that we believe will most likely meet our needs. We aim to avoid taking actions motivated by fear, guilt, shame, desire for reward, or ideas of duty or obligation.
8. **Living in peace with unmet needs:** We aim to work with our feelings when we experience unmet needs, being present with the needs rather than insisting on meeting them. KNOWING THE NEED
9. **Increasing capacity for meeting needs:** We aim to develop our internal resources, such as our NVC skills, meditation, etc., so we can contribute to more connection with self and others and greater diversity of strategies for meeting needs.

Sharing Power (Partnership)

10. **Caring equally for everyone's needs:** We aim to make requests and not demands, thus staying open to the other's strategies to meet their needs. 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.
11. **Protective use of force:** We aim to use the minimum force necessary in order to protect, not to educate, punish, or get what we want without the other's agreement, and only in situations where we find that dialogue fails to meet an immediate need for physical safety. We aim to return to dialogue as soon as we have re-established a sense of physical safety.

Basics of Nonviolent Communication

Introduction

Nonviolent Communication (NVC) has been described as a language of compassion, as a tool for positive social change, and as a spiritual practice. NVC gives us the tools and consciousness to understand what triggers us, to take responsibility for our reactions, and to deepen our connection with ourselves and others, thereby transforming our habitual responses to life. Ultimately, it involves a radical change in how we think about life and meaning. NVC is based on a fundamental principle:

→ Underlying all human actions are needs that people are seeking to meet, and understanding and acknowledging these needs can create a shared basis for connection, cooperation, and more globally - peace.

Understanding each other at the level of our needs creates such connection because, at this deeper human level, the similarities between us outweigh the differences, giving rise to greater compassion. When we focus on needs, without interpreting or conveying criticism, blame, or demands, our deeper creativity flourishes, and solutions arise that were previously blocked from our awareness. At this depth, conflicts and misunderstandings can be resolved with greater ease.

Learning NVC is a process similar to learning a new language or skill: step-by-step learning coupled with ample time for practice lead to growing mastery. While it takes time to develop fluency, any knowledge of a new language makes it more likely that communication can take place. In addition, because NVC invites us to a level of vulnerability and caring that often are not familiar or habitual, full integration of the consciousness underlying this language is likely to require changes in our internal connection to ourselves, and healing of past pain.

The language of NVC includes two parts: honestly expressing ourselves to others, and empathically hearing others. Both are expressed through four components - observations, feelings, needs, and requests - though empathic connection fundamentally relies on connection at the level of feelings and needs, hence observations and requests may or may not be articulated. Practicing NVC involves distinguishing these components from judgments, interpretations, and demands, and learning to embody the consciousness embedded in these components in order to express ourselves and hear ourselves and others in ways more likely to foster understanding and connection, to support everyone involved in getting their needs met, and to nurture in all of us a joy in giving and in receiving. The practice also includes empathic connection with ourselves - "self-empathy." The purpose of self-empathy is to support us in maintaining connection with our own needs, choosing our actions and responses based on self-connection and self-acceptance.

→ [SELF-CONNECTION] The most direct path to peace is through SELF CONNECTION AND ACCEPTANCE

NVC was developed by Dr. Marshall B. Rosenberg, who has introduced it to individuals and organizations world-wide. NVC has been used between warring tribes and in war-torn countries; in schools, prisons, and corporations; in health care, social change, and government institutions; and in intimate personal relationships. Currently, over 200 hundred certified trainers and many more non-certified trainers around the world are sharing NVC in their communities.

DILIGENT
PRACTICE

EVER
MINDFULNESS

PRACTICE: We are creatures of PRACTICE

- as a child did I get practice in assessing my needs OR evaluating and judging??

The Components of NVC

1. Observations

Observations are what we see or hear that we identify as the *stimulus* to our reactions. Our aim is to describe what we are reacting to concretely, specifically and neutrally, much as a video camera might capture the moment. This helps create a shared reality with the other person. The observation gives the context for our expression of feelings and needs, and may not even be needed if both people are clear about the context.

The key to making an observation is to separate our own judgments, evaluations or interpretations from our description of what happened. For example, if we say: "You're rude," the other person may disagree, while if we say: "When you walked in you did not say hello to me," the other person is more likely to recognize the moment that is described.

When we are able to describe what we see or hear in observation language without mixing in evaluation, we raise the likelihood that the person listening to us will hear this first step without immediately wanting to respond and will be more willing to hear our feelings and needs.

Learning to translate judgments and interpretations into observation language moves us away from right/wrong thinking and helps us take responsibility for our reactions by directing our attention to our *needs* as the source of our feelings rather than to the other person. In this way, observations - paving the way towards greater connection with ourselves and with others - emerge as a crucial building block towards a profound consciousness shift. (INSIDE NOW)

2. Feelings

Feelings represent our emotional experience and physical sensations associated with our needs that have been met or that remain unmet (see below). Our aim is to identify, name and connect with those feelings.

The key to identifying and expressing feelings is to focus on words that describe our inner experience rather than words that describe our interpretations of people's actions. For example: "I feel lonely" describes an inner experience, while "I feel like you don't love me" describes an interpretation of how the other person may be feeling.

When we express our feelings, we continue the process of taking responsibility for our experience, which helps others hear what's important to us with less likelihood of hearing criticism or blame of themselves. This increases the likelihood that they will respond in a way that meets both our needs.

The list of feelings in this handout (p. 10) is neither exhaustive nor definitive; it is offered as a resource for exploration and discovery of the richness of our emotional life.

3. Needs

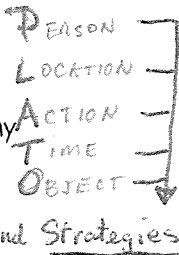
Our needs are an expression of our deepest shared humanity. All human beings share key needs for survival: hydration, nourishment, rest, shelter, and connection to name a few. We also share many

other needs, though we may experience them to varying degrees and may experience them more or less intensely at various times.

In the context of NVC, needs refer to what is most alive in us: our core values and deepest human longings. Understanding, naming, and connecting with our needs helps us improve our relationship with ourselves, as well as foster understanding with others, so we are all more likely to take actions that meet everyone's needs.

Separating Needs...

The key to identifying, expressing, and connecting with needs is to focus on words that describe shared human experience rather than words that describe the particular strategies to meet those needs. Whenever we include a person, a location, an action, a time, or an object in our expression of what we want, we are describing a strategy rather than a need. For example: "I want you to come to my birthday party" may be a particular strategy to meet a need for love and connection. In this case, we have a person, an action, and an implied time and location in the original statement. The internal shift from focusing on a specific strategy to connecting with needs often results in a sense of power and liberation, as we can free ourselves from being attached to one particular strategy by identifying the underlying needs and exploring alternative strategies.



Feelings arise when our needs are met or not met, which happens at every moment of life. Our feelings are related to the trigger, but they are not caused by the trigger: their source is our own met or unmet needs. By connecting our feelings with our needs, therefore, we take full responsibility for our feelings, freeing us and others from fault and blame. And by expressing our unique experience in the moment of a shared human reality of needs, we create the most likely opportunity for another person to see our humanity and to experience empathy and understanding for us.

The list of needs in this handout (p. 12) is by no means exhaustive or definitive. It is offered as a resource for identifying and experiencing your own needs and guessing others' needs. The needs on this list appear in their most abstract, general and universal form. Each person can find inside herself or himself the specific nuance and flavor of these broader categories, which will describe more fully her or his experience.

4. Requests

In order to meet our needs, we make requests to assess how likely we are to get cooperation for particular strategies we have in mind for meeting our needs. Our aim is to identify and express a specific action that we believe will serve this purpose, and then check with others involved about their willingness to participate in meeting our needs in this way. In a given moment, it is our connection with another that determines the quality of their response to our request. Therefore often our requests in the moment are "connection requests," intended to foster connection and understanding and to determine whether we have sufficiently connected to move to a "solution request." An example of a connection request might be: "Would you tell me how you feel about this?" An example of a solution request might be "Would you be willing to take your shoes off when you come in the house?"

The spirit of requests relies on our willingness to hear a "no" and to continue to work with ourselves or others to find ways to meet everyone's needs. Whether we are making a request or a demand is often evident by our response when our request is denied. A denied demand will lead to punitive consequences; a denied request most often will lead to further dialogue. We recognize that "no" is an

expression of some need that is preventing the other person from saying "yes". If we trust that through dialogue we can find strategies to meet both of our needs, "no" is simply information to alert us that saying yes to our request may be too costly in terms of the other person's needs. We can then continue to seek connection and understanding to allow additional strategies to arise that will work to meet more needs.

To increase the likelihood that our requests would be understood, we attempt to use language that is as concrete and doable as possible, and that is truly a request rather than a demand. For example, "I would like you to always come on time" is unlikely to be doable, while "Would you be willing to spend 15 minutes with me talking about what may help you arrive at 9 am to our meetings?" is concrete and doable. While a person may assent to the former expression ("Yes, I'll always come on time"), our deeper needs - for connection, confidence, trust, responsibility, respect, or others - are likely to remain unmet.

If someone agrees to our request out of fear, guilt, shame, obligation, or the desire for reward, this compromises the quality of connection and trust between us. When we are able to express a clear request, we raise the likelihood that the person listening to us will experience choice in their response. As a consequence, while we may not gain immediate assent to our wishes, we are more likely to get our needs met over time because we are building trust that everyone's needs matter. Within an atmosphere of such trust, goodwill increases, and with it a willingness to support each other in getting our needs met.

Learning to make clear requests and shifting our consciousness to making requests in place of demands are very challenging skills for most people. People often find the request part to be the hardest, because of what we call a "crisis of imagination": a difficulty in identifying a strategy that could actually meet our needs without being at the expense of other needs. Even before considering the needs of others, the very act of coming up with what we call a positive, doable request is challenging. We are habituated to thinking in terms of what we want people to stop doing ("don't yell at me"), and how we want them to be ("treat me with respect") rather than what we want them to do ("Would you be willing to lower your voice or talk later?"). With time, and a deeper connection to our needs, our creativity expands to imagine and embrace more strategies.

→ This fourth step is critical to our ability to create the life we want. In particular, shifting from demands to requests entails a leap in focus and in faith: we shift from focusing on getting our needs met, to focusing on the quality of connection that will allow both of our needs to truly matter and ultimately also to be met.

Empathy

Expressing our own observations, feelings, needs and requests to others is one part of NVC. The second part is empathy: the process of connecting with another by guessing *their* feelings and needs. Empathic connection can sometimes happen silently, but in times of conflict, communicating to another person that we understand their feelings and that their needs *matter* to us can be a powerful turning point in problem situations. Demonstrating that we have such understanding is not the same as agreeing to act in ways that don't meet our own needs.

→ Connecting empathically with another person is a way to meet our own needs - for understanding, connection, contribution, or others. At the same time, we hope that the empathy would meet the other person's needs as well, and would aid both of us in finding strategies that would meet our needs.

The language of NVC often helps us relate with others, but the heart of empathy is in our ability to compassionately connect with our own and others' humanity. Offering our empathic presence, in this sense, is one strategy (or request) through which we can meet our own needs. It is a gift to another person and to ourselves of our full presence.

When we use NVC to connect empathically, we use the same four components in the form of a question, since we can *never know* what is going on inside the other. The other person will always be the ultimate authority on what is going on for them. Our empathy may meet other people's needs for understanding, or it may spark their own self-discovery. We may ask something like:

[When you [see, hear, etc...]]

Are you feeling

Because you need

[And would you like?]

Most often, in an ongoing process of dialogue, there is no need to mention either the observation (it is usually clear in the context of communication) or the request (since we are already acting on an *assumed* request for empathy). We might get to guessing a request when we have connected more and we are ~~x~~ ready to explore strategies.

In the process of sharing empathy between two people, if both parties are able to connect at the level of feelings and needs, a transformation often happens in which one or both parties experience a shift in intention and attention. This can lead to a shift of needs or generate new reserves of kindness and generosity, or, in seemingly impossible situations, it can open us to remarkable bursts of creative solutions that were unimaginable when clouded by disconnection. Those are moments of deep human connection, satisfaction and hope.

SEEDS OF
ACTION

Self-Empathy

Both expression of our own feelings and needs and empathic guesses of others' feelings and needs are grounded in a particular consciousness which is at the heart of NVC. This consciousness is nurtured by the practice of self-empathy.

In self-empathy, we bring the same compassionate attention to ourselves that we give to others when listening to them using NVC. This means listening through any interpretations and judgments we are making to clarify how we are in terms of our feelings and needs. This inner awareness and clarity supports us in choosing our next step: expressing ourselves to others, or receiving them with empathy. This next step is our request to ourselves about where we want to focus our attention. BIGGIES

INSIDE
NOW

The practice of NVC entails an intention to connect compassionately with ourselves and with others, and an ability to keep our attention in the present moment - which includes being aware that sometimes in this present moment we are recalling the past, or imagining a future possibility.

Often self-empathy comes easy, as we access our sensations, emotions and needs, to attune to how we are. However, in moments of conflict or reactivity to others, we may find ourselves reluctant to access an intention to connect compassionately, and we may falter in our capacity to attend to the present moment. Self-empathy at times like this has the power to transform our disconnected state of being and return us to our compassionate intention and present-oriented attention. With practice, many people find that self-empathy alone sometimes resolves inner conflicts and conflicts with others as it transforms our experience of life. }

Feelings/Emotions - Partial List

(internal sensations, without reference to thoughts, interpretations)

The following are words we use when we want to express a combination of mental states and physical sensations. 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.

A. Feelings we may experience when our needs are being met

AFFECTIONATE

compassionate
friendly
loving
openhearted
sympathetic
tender
warm

CONFIDENT

empowered
open
proud
safe
secure

ENGAGED

absorbed
alert
curious
engrossed
enchanted
entranced
fascinated
interested
intrigued
involved
spellbound
stimulated

EXCITED

amazed
animated
ardent
aroused
dazzled
eager
energetic
enthusiastic
giddy
invigorated
lively
passionate
surprised
vibrant

EXHILARATED

blissful
ecstatic
elated
enthralled
exuberant
radiant
rapturous
thrilled

GRATEFUL

appreciative
moved
thankful
touched

HOPEFUL

expectant
encouraged
optimistic

JOYFUL

amused
delighted
glad
happy
jubilant
pleased
tickled

INSPIRED

amazed
awed
wonder

PEACEFUL

calm
clearheaded
comfortable
centered
content
equanimity
fulfilled
mellow
quiet
relaxed
relieved
satisfied
serene
still
tranquil
trusting

REFRESHED

enlivened
rejuvenated
renewed
rested
restored
revived

B. Feelings we may experience when our needs are not being met

AFRAID

apprehensive
dread
foreboding
frightened
mistrustful
panicked
petrified
scared
suspicious
terrified
wary
worried

ANNOYED

aggravated
dismayed
disgruntled
displeased
exasperated
frustrated
impatient
irritated
irked

ANGRY

angry
enraged
furious
incensed
indignant
irate
livid
outraged
resentful — Po

AVERSION

Animosity
appalled
contempt
disgusted
dislike
hate
horrified
hostile
repulsed

CONFUSED

ambivalent
baffled
bewildered
dazed
hesitant
lost
mystified
perplexed
puzzled
torn

DISCONNECTED

alienated
aloof
apathetic
bored
cold
detached
distant
distracted
indifferent
numb
removed
withdrawn

DISQUIET

agitated
alarmed
discombobulated
disconcerted
disturbed
perturbed
rattled
restless
shocked
startled
surprised
troubled
turbulent
turmoil
uncomfortable
uneasy
unnerved
unsettled
upset

EMBARRASSED

ashamed
chagrined
flustered
mortified
self-conscious

FATIGUE

beat
burnt out
depleted
exhausted
lethargic
listless
sleepy
tired
weary
worn out

PAIN

agony
anguished
bereaved
devastated
grief
heartbroken
hurt
lonely — Po
miserable
regretful
remorseful

SAD

depressed
dejected
despair
despondent
disappointed
discouraged
disheartened
forlorn
gloomy — Po
heavy hearted
hopeless
melancholy
unhappy
wretched

TENSE

Anxious
cranky
distracted
distraught
edgy
fidgety
frazzled
irritable
jittery
nervous
overwhelmed
restless
stressed out

VULNERABLE

fragile
guarded
helpless
insecure
leery
reserved
sensitive
shaky

YEARNING

envious
jealous
longing
nostalgic
pining
wistful

(This list is a collaborative effort of many, and adapted from Marshall Rosenberg's original list)

Universal Human Needs - Partial List

(without reference to specific people, time, actions, things) **PLATO**

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.

CONNECTION

- Acceptance
- Affection
- Appreciation
- Belonging
- Cooperation
- Communication
- Closeness
- Community
- Companionship
- Compassion
- Consideration
- Consistency
- Empathy
- Inclusion
- Intimacy
- Love
- Mutuality
- Nurturing
- Respect
- Safety
- Security
- Stability
- Support
- To be known
- To be seen
- To be understood
- Trust
- Understanding
- Warmth

HONESTY

- Authenticity
- Integrity
- Presence

PLAY

- Joy
- Humor

PEACE

- Beauty
- Communion
- Ease
- Equality
- Harmony
- Inspiration
- Order

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

- Air
- Food
- Movement/exercise
- Rest / sleep
- Sexual expression
- Safety (protection from life threatening situations)
- Shelter
- Touch
- Water

MEANING

- Awareness
- Celebration of life
- Challenge
- Clarity
- Competence
- Consciousness
- Contribution
- Creativity
- Discovery
- Efficacy
- Effectiveness
- Growth
- Hope
- Learning
- Mourning
- Participation
- Purpose
- Self-expression
- Stimulation
- Understanding

AUTONOMY

- Choice
- Freedom
- Independence
- Space
- Spontaneity

(This list is a collaborative effort of many, and adapted from Marshall Rosenberg's original list)

Colloquial Expression of Needs

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..... is fun for me
I thrive on.... matters to me
I really enjoy.... is meaningful to me
I would be nourished by.... is so important to me
I value.... makes my life feel worthwhile
I want.... helps me feel well/good/whole/happy
I long for	

Sample (Connection Requests)

The following are some possible ways of phrasing common connection requests during a dialogue.

A. Requests to support the quality of connection:

1. Would you tell me what you just heard me say?
2. Would you tell me your understanding of my feelings and needs?
3. Would you be willing to listen to me talk about my experience?
4. Would you tell me how you're feeling about what I just said?
5. Would you tell me what specifically I can do that would help you feel more confident that I understand what you're saying?

B. Requests to support connection towards solution:

6. Would you tell me what you need to know in order to agree to my request?
7. Would you tell me what needs of yours are preventing you from saying yes to my request?
8. Would you tell me what you're hearing in my expression that's leading you to say no to my request?
9. Would you brainstorm together to come up with solutions that would work for both of us?
10. Would you tell me if there is any way for us to work this out other than my agreeing to your request?
11. Would you tell me if you imagine any other strategies that would meet both of our needs?

*Solution
Request*

*Will
you--*

Conventional Patterns of Communication

Diagnosis - Criticism, Judgment, Analysis, Comparison, Blame: Implying wrongness or badness. e.g. "You are too sensitive." *LABELS LIMIT*

Demands: Making requests which implicitly or explicitly threaten some form of blame or punishment if the request is not acted upon. e.g. "Please type up this report. I am going to be very upset if it's not ready in time."

Deserve - Justification of Reward and Punishment: Implying that certain actions merit reward and certain actions merit punishment. e.g. "He deserves to be punished for what he did." *GOOD/BAD*
WRONG/RIGHT

Denial of Responsibility: Attributing the cause of our actions or feelings to anything other than our needs:

Others' Actions: "I fired my secretary because she didn't type my reports in time."

Dictates of Authority: "I misrepresented our earnings in our accounting system because my boss told me to."

Institutional Policies, Rules, and Regulations: "I can't stop giving grades because it's the school's policy."

Group Pressure: "I drink after work because everyone else does."

Gender, Social or Age Roles: "I hate going to work but I do it because I am a father and a husband."

Uncontrollable Impulses: "I couldn't help flirting with her."

Diagnosis, Psychological History: "I yell at my children because I grew up in a dysfunctional family."

Vague, Impersonal Forces: "We have to put people in prison because otherwise nobody would be safe in the streets."

GIVING
AWAY
RESPONSIBILITY