

MEDIATION MODEL OF NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION (NVC)

(Based on the work of Marshall Rosenberg and the Center for Nonviolent Communication, www.cnvc.org)

This approach to conflict focuses on facilitating connection that leads to the emergence of new possibilities and solutions. NVC mediation facilitates a conversation in which each side is heard to their satisfaction, both understanding each other's particular experience and connecting at a universal level of human needs. The process moves from thinking that creates disconnection and conflict to presence and a language that brings people back to a natural compassion – the enjoyment of contributing to one another's well being and working together to find mutually beneficial solutions.

I. Four Mediation Contexts (also, “big three” domains of 1st, 2nd & 3rd person)

1. **Internal:** Mediating a conflict between different aspects of ourselves.
2. **Interpersonal (Self-Other):** When you are mediating a conflict you are having with another.
3. **Formal/Informal:** Mediating others who are in conflict -- either formally when there is agreement by the parties for mediation, or informally when you have not been asked.

II. Three Temporal Contexts

1. **Before** (prep) -- Enemy Images Process (EIP) for Pre-Mediation, Conflict Coaching
2. **During** -- Five-step mediation model and Healing & Reconciliation (H&R) process
3. **After** – Learning Feedback Cycle, Mourn/Celebrate/Learn (MCL), “Chooser-Educator” (C-E)

III. Intentions

1. **Presence** – awareness that transcends thinking and fight-flight-freeze biochemical reaction
2. **Connection with self and others** – experience of shared humanity, wholeness with life
3. **Compassionate giving and receiving** – acting from willingness and enjoyment of contributing to well being of self and others

IV. Two Phase/Five-Step Model

1. **Empathize with person A** and surface their need(s).
2. **Ask party B to reflect** party A's need(s).
3. **Empathize with person B** and surface their need(s).
4. **Ask party A to reflect** the party B's need(s).
5. **Getting to agreements** - supporting clear “doable” solution requests and agreements

V. Nine Mediator Skills/Choices

1. **Empathy** (self & other) – presence, understanding/meaning, and need language/deepening
2. **Connection Requests** -- asking each party to reflect other's needs and exp and how they feel
3. **“Pulling by the ears”** – re-requesting when the person hasn't reflected the other's needs/exp
4. **Emergency 1st Aid Empathy** when person is in too much pain to reflect back other's needs/exp
5. **Tracking** where you are in the process and the needs that have been expressed
6. **Interrupting** with the intention to connect with the speaker's inner experience vs. judgments
7. **Self-Empathy** for the mediator
8. **Self-Expression** by the mediator
9. **Solution Requests** -- present, positive, action language, to get all needs met compassionately

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VI. Elements of empathy: being fully with a person's experience (following vs. leading)

"Every judgment is a tragic expression of an unmet need" – Marshall Rosenberg

- A. **Presence** – resting attention on the speaker, letting go thinking, connecting to life
- B. **Silent empathy** – silently guessing speaker's feelings and needs
- B. **Understanding/Meaning** – reflecting back in a way the speaker feels heard, understood, "gotten" as they would like about their reality and experience
- C. **Need Language** – connect thoughts, feelings, and wants to needs; deepen into the needs and "savor"; and listen for and ask about requests of self/other(s).

VII. Role plays (set up and debrief)

- A. **Dividing up the time** --how long each mediates, order of rotation, timekeeper?
- B. **Create a situation** – real or made up, what context, internal or external?
- B. **Dial** the difficulty level (see below) to be in your "Learning Zone"
- C. **Requests** to coach/observer(s)
- D. **Mediator self-connection** – self-connection practice, self-empathy and intention setting
- E. **Feedback afterwards** – see below

VIII. Dialing the difficulty of the triad role plays (requests to "disputants")

- A. **Intensity** of "jackal", strength of conflictants' judgments, anger, etc
- B. **Skills** you as mediator want to work on and type of support you'd like from conflicts
- C. **Level of cooperation** – e.g. disputants talking over each other or not

IX. Giving feedback to mediator after role play & sharing learning and experiences

- A. **Celebration, then mourning** – start with a round of at least one thing mediator did that contributed to connection, then what didn't contribute to connection and what might have contributed better. TAKE NOTES while mediation is happening. Look for both what you see working as well as what you see that's not.
- B. **What specific actions/language** by mediator contributed to connection with self and/or other, or not; speak from your own feelings of more or less connection experienced
- C. **Mediator request way you want feedback from disputants/coach**, e.g. not just what didn't work but also what could have done differently; ask for more specific info to get learning you want
- D. **Feedback to coach, disputants, observer(s)** – give feedback on the feedback, what was helpful or not about how the feedback was given

X. The Agreement Phase

- 1. **Solution agreements**
 - a. present, positive (what do want), action language ("doable")
 - b. willingness, acting from compassionate giving and receiving
 - c. interdependence, seeking to get other's needs met as well as one's own
- 2. **Supporting agreements** – requests/agreements to support the solution agreements
- 3. **Remedial agreements** – requests/agreements around what to do if/when solution agreements are not kept; Celebrate/Mourn/Learn model and Learning Feedback Cycle

