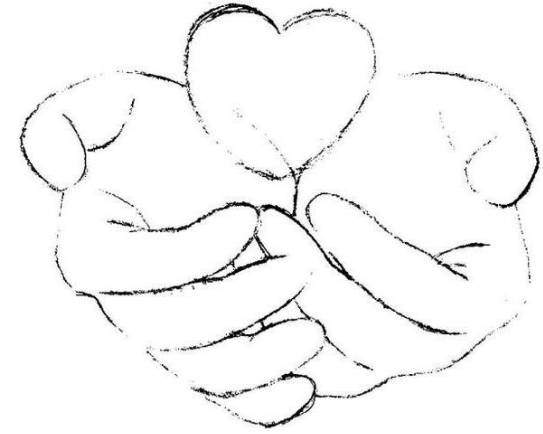




Nonviolent Communication Practices that Embody Person-Centered and Trauma-Informed Care

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Invitations



- To be open to learning about how our choices impact others
- To orient to curiosity and let go of judgment and criticism
- If sharing a story, provide the headline version and only relevant details that support learning for the whole
- Demonstrate self-awareness regarding the amount of airtime we use and to stay in balance with contributions made by other participants
- Speak from your own personal experience, from the "I", rather than speaking generally for others

Objectives

1. Explain the connection between person-centered trauma-informed (PCTI) care and the Nonviolent Communication (NVC) assumption that everything that human beings say and do is an attempt to meet one or more of their shared human needs.
2. Transform a judgment into an empathic reflection.
3. Differentiate between a demand and a request and how this distinction upholds PCTI principles.

Person-centered
trauma-informed care
recognizes the
pervasive nature of
trauma and integrates
principles and practices
to promote healing and
recovery.



Childhood
bullying

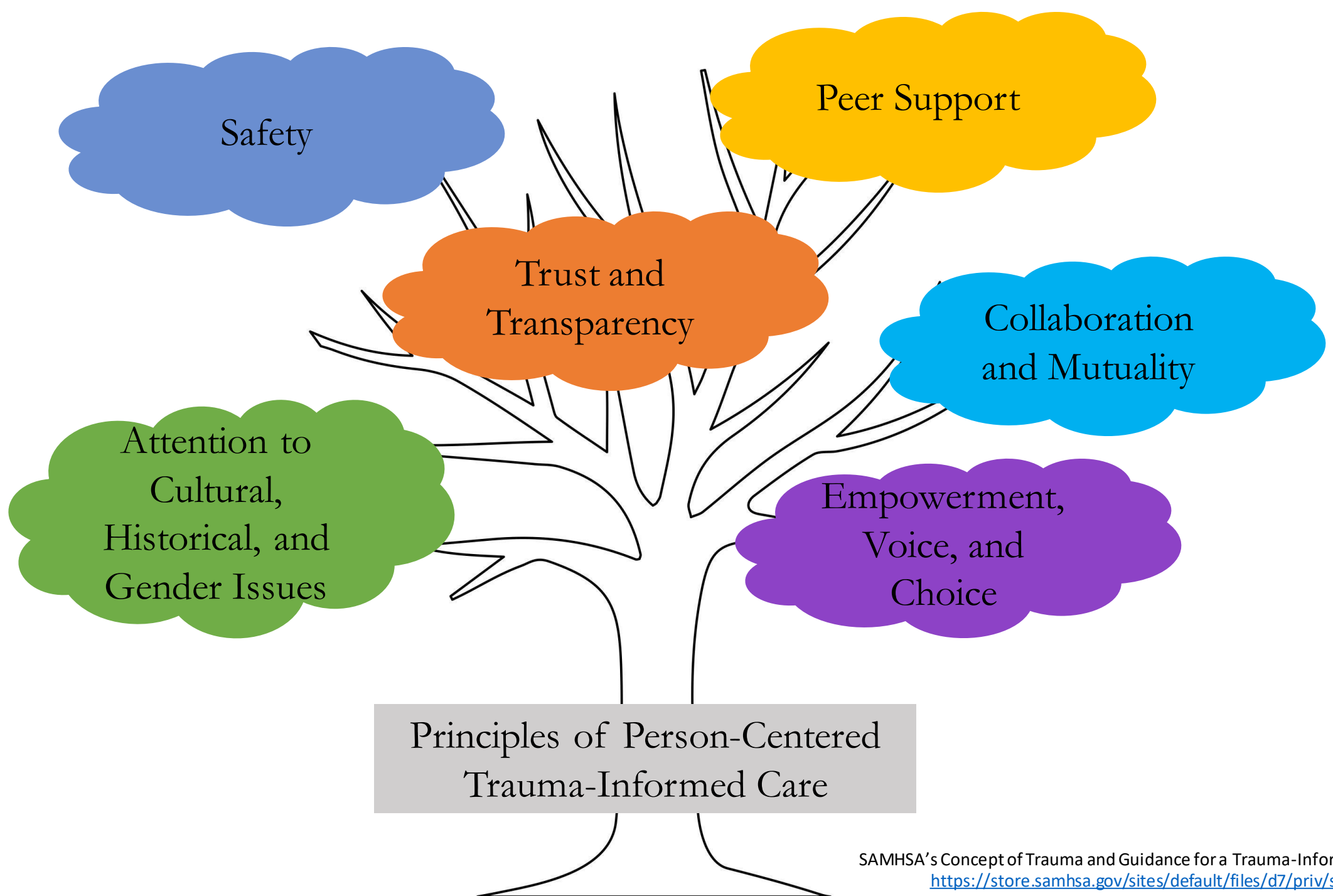
Divorce

Medical
crisis

Emotionally
charged
interaction today

Pandemic

Trauma can be cumulative and impact a person throughout their life, no matter how long ago the event occurred.



Safety

- **Physical safety** includes the physical plant, security measures, disaster planning, policies and procedures.
- **Social safety** refers to the ability to be a part of a group, to listen and to be heard, to be able to play a role in conflict resolution, to use one's intelligence and creativity to serve a group process without engaging in behavior or activities that destroy the integrity of the self or the group.
- **Moral safety** reflects an environment that actively defines and redefines a moral universe of integrity, responsibility, honesty, tolerance, compassion, peace, nonviolence, justice, and an abiding concern for human rights.

Trust and Transparency

Trust – Integrating trauma-informed values of safety, empowerment, voice and choice supports building trust

- Gentle, no ‘agenda’ approach
- Paying attention to comfort and nonverbals
- Upholding confidentiality and privacy

Transparency - organizational operations and decisions are transparent

- Predictability with processes and daily activities
- Emphasis is not on “getting it right all the time” but rather how situations are handled when circumstances provoke feelings of being vulnerable or unsafe

Empowerment, Voice and Choice

Recognize and build on individuals' strengths and experiences

Support self-determination (not coercion)

Cultivate self-advocacy skills

Give voice to people who historically have not had a say

Emphasis on shared decision-making, choice, and goal setting

Belief in healing and recovery, sense of hope for the future

Collaboration and Mutuality

Emphasis on partnering with residents/patients/families

Leveling power differences, e.g., supervisors-employees, staff-clients

Meaningful sharing of power and decision-making

Everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed culture

Peer Support

Support from other people who share similar experiences

- Stories and lived experiences can support recovery and healing

Connections that help a person feel safe and hopeful

Attention to Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues

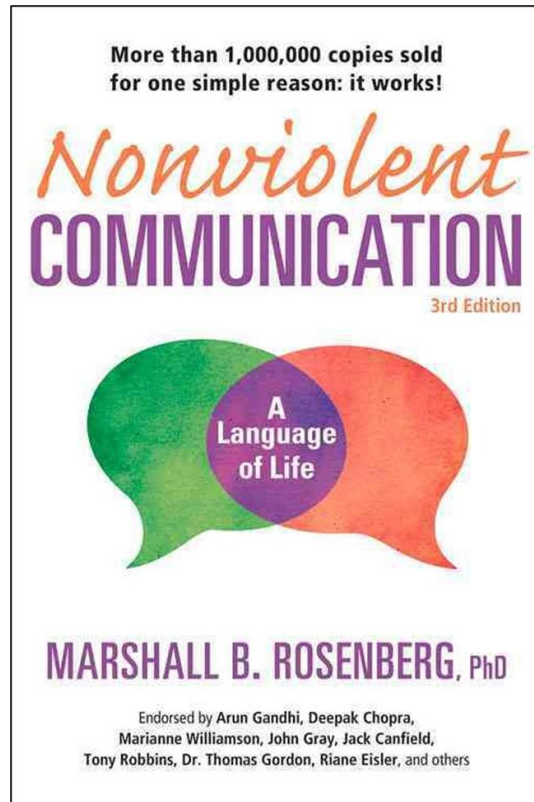
Self-awareness of unconscious bias, stigma, discrimination, stereotypes (gender, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, geography, etc.)

- Organization actively addresses cultural stereotypes and biases
- Offer gender responsive services

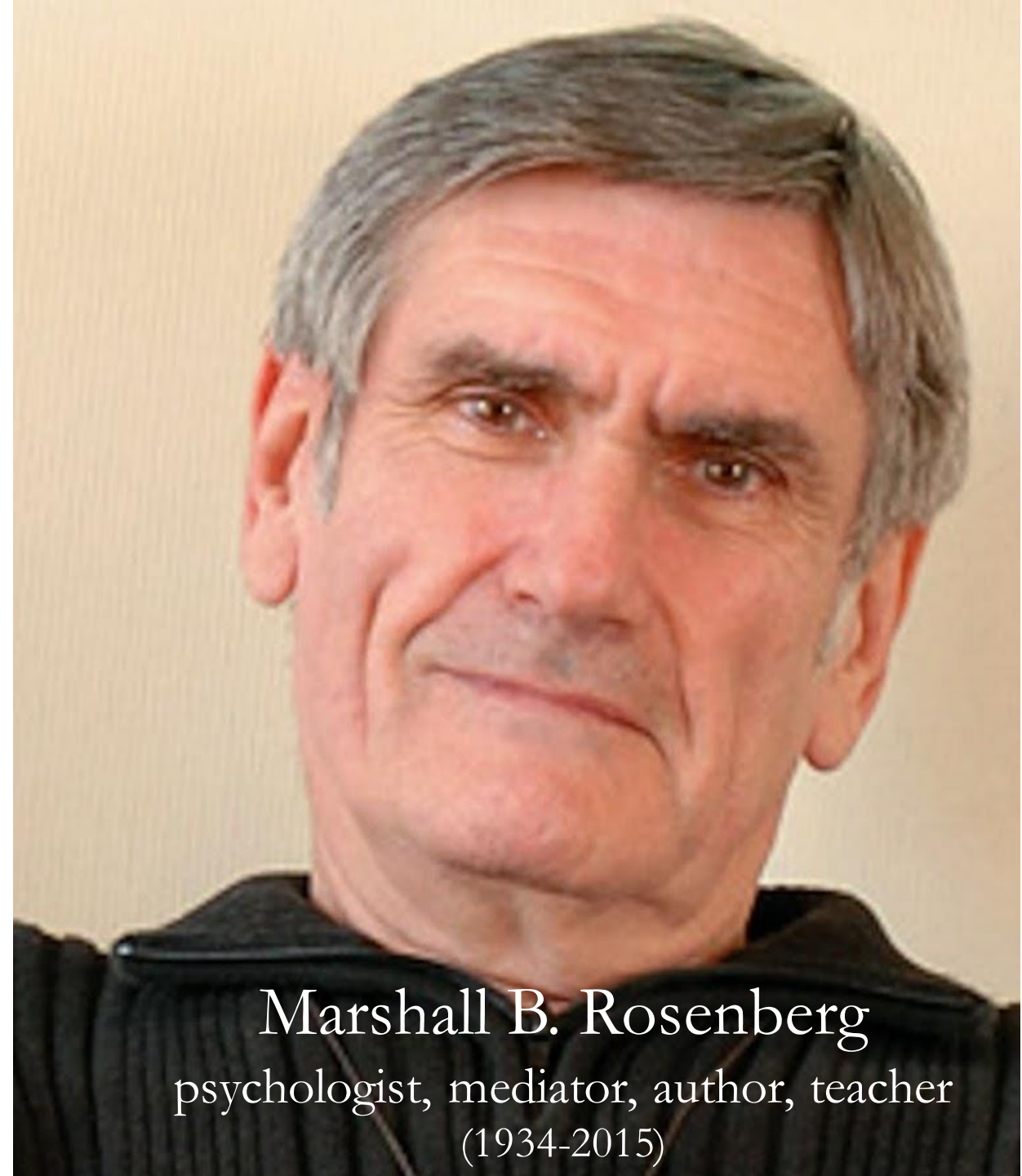
Incorporate policies, protocols and processes that are responsive to the racial, ethnic and cultural needs of individuals served

- Cultural humility and curiosity
- Healing value of traditional cultural connections

Recognize and address historical trauma (events experienced by a collective community that are also experienced personally *and* can be transmitted over generations, e.g., Holocaust, slavery, genocide, victimization, oppression)



Nonviolent Communication (NVC) is a set of skills that supports a communication model based on empathy.



Marshall B. Rosenberg
psychologist, mediator, author, teacher
(1934-2015)

The HOW

Nonviolent Communication (NVC)
is the *practice* to integrate PCTI

The WHAT

Person-centered
trauma-informed care (PCTI)
principles

Social service and healthcare staff have deep intention to care for other human beings.



You are meeting with a couple in their home to discuss their service plan. In the past three months, they have declined multiple home visits from different team members and then request schedule changes. One spouse has had significant health changes, including hospitalization. Adult children are supportive but busy with their families and work. Everyone is frustrated and you are spending several hours a month managing scheduling complications.

Intent vs. Impact

Intent – the motivation (inspiration, stimulus) behind our words and actions

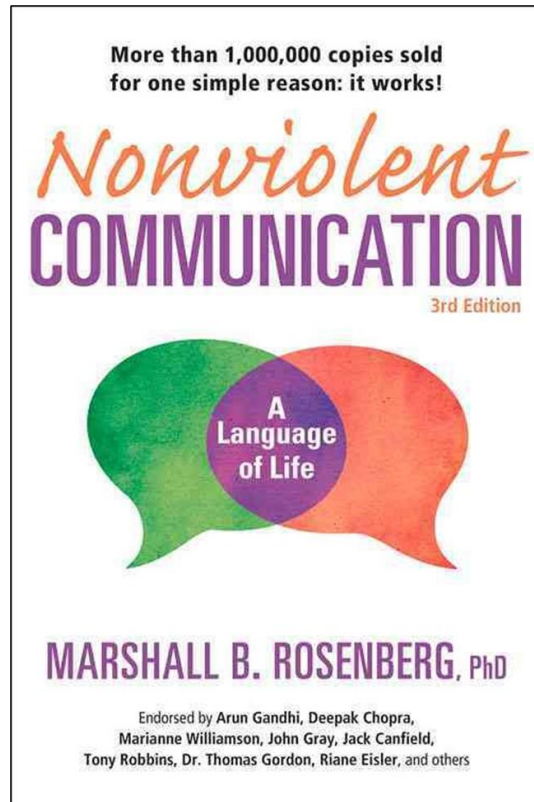
Impact – how our words and actions are experienced by another person

IMPACT VS. INTENTION

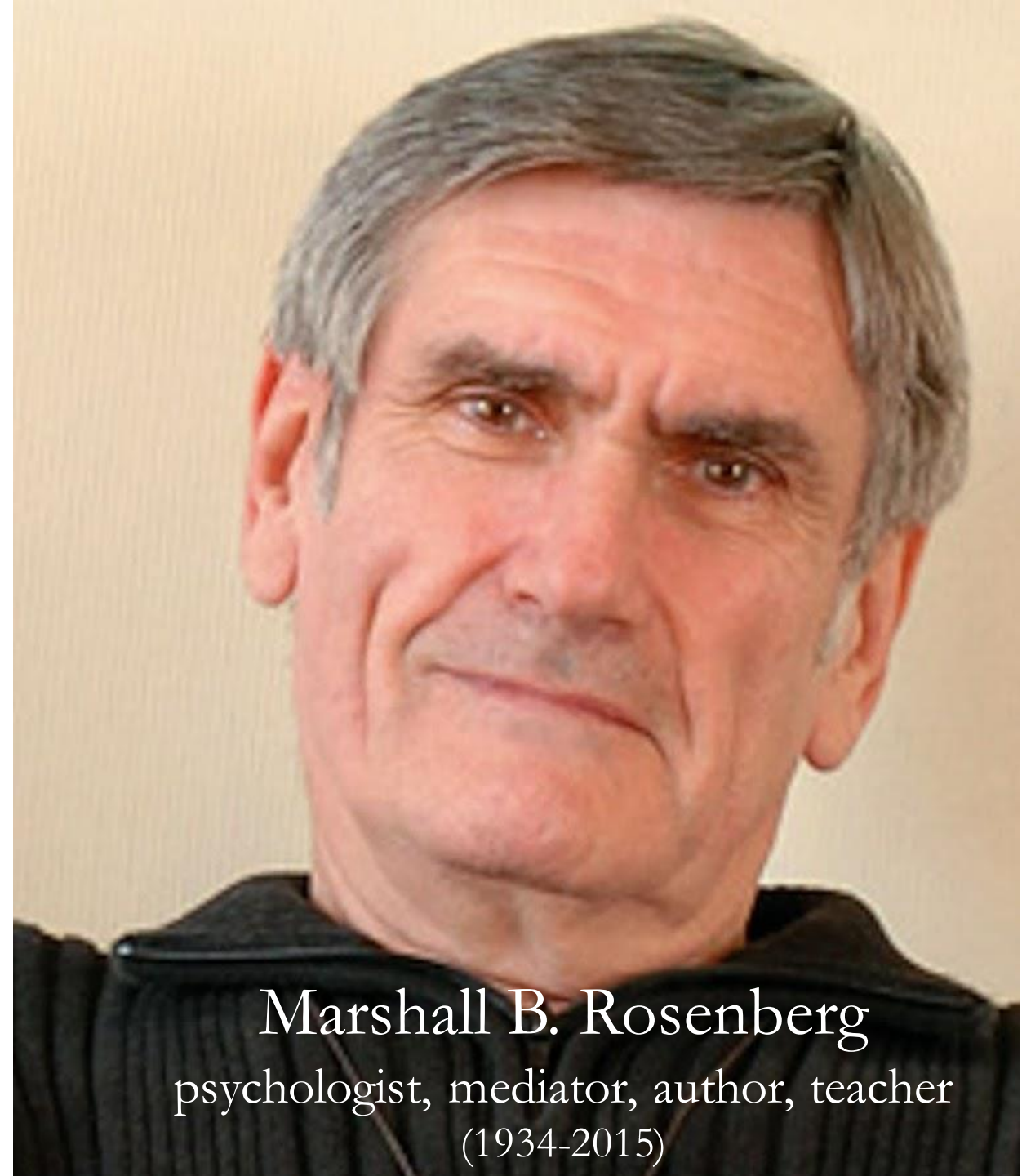


I DIDN'T MEAN TO RUN OVER YOUR FOOT...
I'M A GOOD DRIVER!

NVC language, tools, skills, and consciousness help close the gap between the intention to care and the impact (what we say and do) by aligning the intention with the impact.



Nonviolent Communication
(NVC) is a set of skills that
supports a communication model
based on empathy.



Marshall B. Rosenberg
psychologist, mediator, author, teacher
(1934-2015)

Empathy - A quality of understanding another person's experience that provides warm accompaniment without judgment.

(Accompaniment – *the experience* of being heard and understood, of mattering.)



The beauty of empathy is that when you can take the perspective (viewpoint) of another person, things can shift.


MAY WE LISTEN
WITH OUR EARS...



KOTERBA
OMAHA WORLD-HERALD

...AND OUR HEARTS...

Empathy does not mean agreement



Human
beings are
hardwired
for *empathy*...

...and socialized to block it

Non-Empathic Responses (empathy blocks)

Advising: I think you should...

Interrogating: How did this happen?

Story Telling: This reminds me of...

Educating: Eating a healthy diet will help.

Sympathizing: I feel so badly for you.

Diagnosing: It sounds like you're depressed.

Judging: What a mess this is.

Correcting: No, that's not what happened.

One-upping: If you think that's bad, wait until you hear this.

Reassuring: Everything is going to be just fine.

Denial of Feelings: Don't be sad.

Minimizing: It isn't that bad.

Blaming: This is your fault.

Criticizing: If you took better care of yourself, this wouldn't have happened.

Labeling: Because you are an Asian woman...

Analyzing: He treats you like that because you have no boundaries.

Consoling: Don't worry, you'll be okay.

Shutting Down: Don't think about it. Be happy.

Explaining: The reason why I'm telling you this is so you will be more compliant with treatment.

Fixing: We can get a new physical therapist for you.

Intent and Impact

When we want to care for someone, we may come with empathy blocks which creates more impact and disconnection

Statement: “You’re doing a great job with this family.”

- *Intent*: To reassure and relieve distress, pain, or suffering
- *Impact*: Disconnection, shut down (*unless you specifically requested reassurance!*)

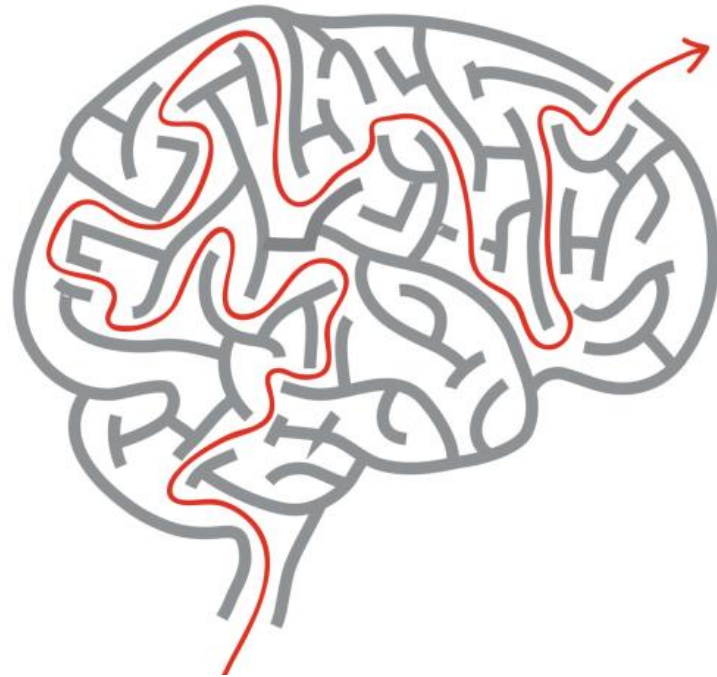
Statement: “I think you should involve the children.”

- *Intent*: To be helpful and share wisdom
- *Impact*: Disconnection, debate (*unless you specifically requested advice!*)

Remember that we are all recipients of
social conditioning.

Be kind and compassionate with yourself,
“Of course, that’s how I’m showing up!”

Our Brains are Designed to Solve Problems



We don't think that just being with the other person and hearing them as supportive. The ***need for understanding*** is a very deep need for humans. Accompanying someone in this way is a skill.

Shared Human Needs

Inner qualities or longings which underlie our behavior and motivate everything we do and say.



Human Needs

BODYFULNESS

Water
Food
Digestion
Shelter
Safety
Warmth
Coolness
Pleasure
Hug
Nature connection
Rest
Sleep
Light
Darkness
Breath
Sexual expression
Touch, Being touched
Comfort
Gentleness
Speech
Silence
Privacy
Care
Health
Healing, Being healed
Sunlight
Movement
Exercise
Music, Sound
Rhythm
Death

MEANING

Gratitude
Celebrating life
Self-expression
To matter
Purpose
Flow
Living according to one's values
Courage
Mourning, Tears
Exploration
Discovery
Meaning
Understanding
Contribution
Enrich life
Presence, Centeredness
Hope, Vision, Dream, Faith
Spirituality
Clarity
Focus
Concentration
To know and to be in reality
Learning, Growth
Inspiration, Creativity
Innovation
Challenge, Stimulation
Empowerment
Competence
Participation
Simplicity

ONENESS/UNITY

Authenticity
Integrity
Presence
Honesty
Togetherness
Wholeness
Grace
Bodyfulness

INTERDEPENDENCE

Harmony
Peace
Peace of mind
Flow
Wellbeing of those we love
Beauty
Calm
Relaxation
Tranquility
Ease
Sustainability
Stability
Balance
Predictability
Structure
Wholeness
Capacity
Abundance
Certainty
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Honesty
Integrity

AUTONOMY

Spontaneity
Knowledge, Information
Space
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Transformation
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PLAY

Joy
Laughter
Fun
Humor
Spontaneity
Lightness
Passion
Discovery
Adventure
Renewal
Refreshment
Variety
Diversity
Mystery
Wonder
Amazement
Myth, Story

CONNECTION

Love, Self-love
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Empathy, Self-empathy
Compassion, Self-Compassion
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To know, To be known
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Friendship
Care, Self-care
Consideration
Acceptance
Reassurance
Respect
Trust
Reciprocity
Inclusion
Involvement
Support, Help, Nurturance
Affection
Giving, Receiving
Tenderness, Softness
Consistency, Continuity

You are meeting with a couple in their home to discuss their service plan. In the past three months, they have declined multiple home visits from different team members and then request schedule changes. One spouse has had significant health changes, including hospitalization. Adult children are supportive but busy with their work and families. Staff are frustrated and you are spending several hours a month managing scheduling complications.

What needs are “up” for you in this scenario?

Human Needs

BODYFULNESS

Water
Food
Digestion
Shelter
Safety
Warmth
Coolness
Pleasure
Hug
Nature connection
Rest
Sleep
Light
Darkness
Breath
Sexual expression
Touch, Being touched
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What needs might be “up” for the couple?

Human Needs

BODYFULNESS

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Shared Humanity

The connection
between PCTI
and NVC



Acknowledging Needs May Be Tricky

We are socialized (conditioned) to associate having needs with weakness (i.e., being “needy” or “selfish”)

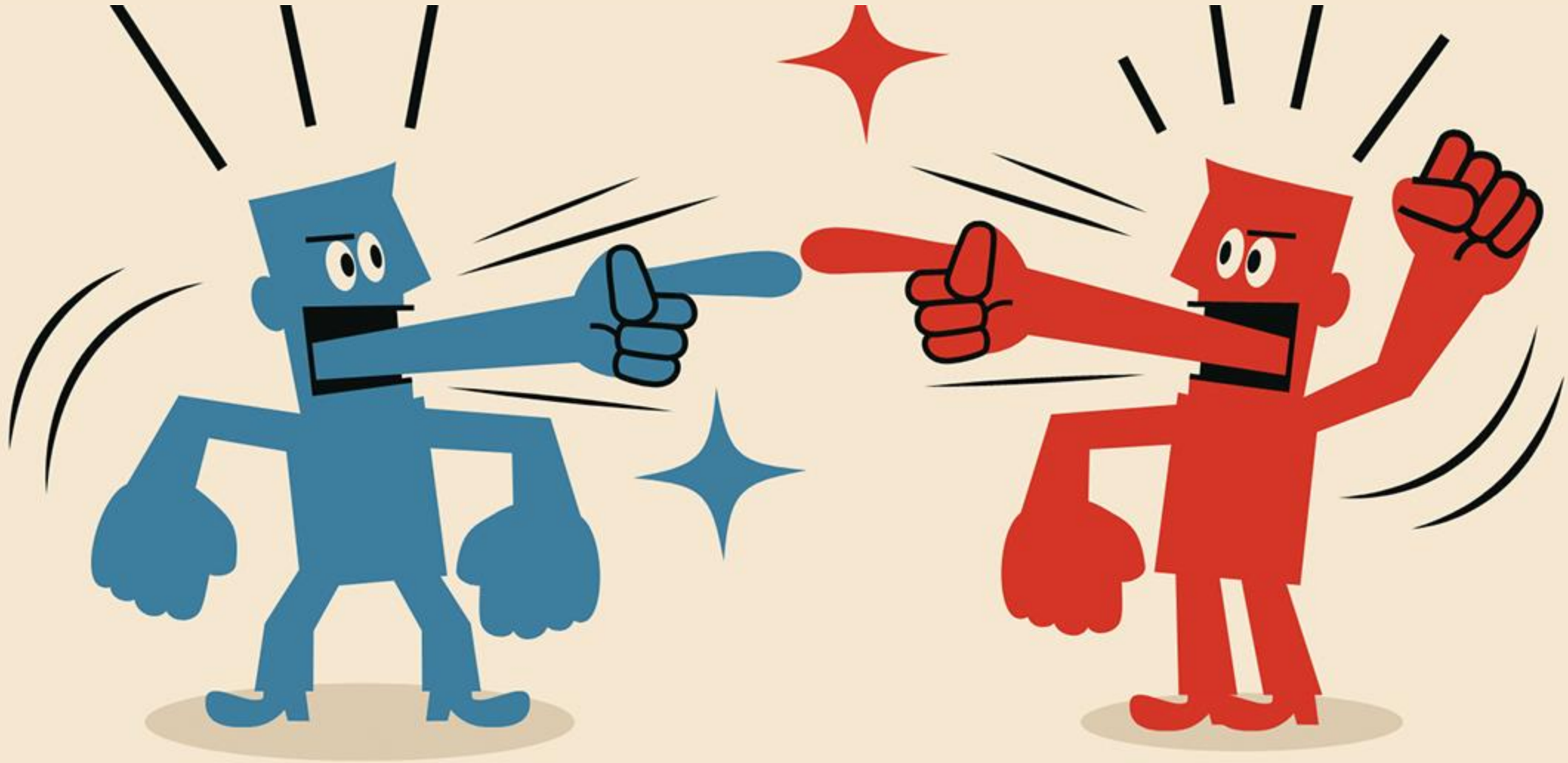
- Taught to care for others and ignore our needs, or vice versa

We are conditioned to disconnect from our needs, to not need anyone, and to be fully self-sufficient

- It is an illusion because we are always in this net of interdependence where we need other people to help meet our needs, and vice versa

Connecting with needs can be uncomfortable

- We have to go through layers of shame and integrate the reality of *interdependence*
- Hiding our vulnerability is costly because we don't receive support to meet our needs



We are socialized (conditioned) to argue, judge, criticize, defend, demand, threaten, and blame.



Judging/Blaming Others

I can't believe you...

He should have known better...

It's their fault...

If you were just more...



Judging/Blaming Myself

I should have...

I'm not good enough...

What was I thinking...

I'm so...

Both are costly to our wellbeing and our relationships at work and home.

None of Us Invented This...

(judgment, blame, demands, threats, shame, labels,
“guilt-tripping”, accusations, criticism)

- It's part of the socialization process and we integrate it into our systems (schools, family, media, politics)
- It's not bad or wrong, it's a tragedy because it doesn't support us in meeting our needs (getting what we want)

We need to bring compassion to our situation ***and*** acknowledge that we contribute to the distrust and pain.

RIGHT

Whoever is right
deserves a reward.

Everyone wants
to be right, no
one wants to be
wrong.

Whoever is
wrong, deserves
to be punished.

WRONG

Judgement
Criticism
Blame

Needs-based
Consciousness

here

there

How can we move from ineffective (life-alienating) communication to effective (life-serving) communication to help us collaborate and achieve our goals?

The Antidote to Judgment/Blame

Assumption of Innocence

- A key NVC principle (assumption) is that everything people do or say is an attempt to meet their needs.
- If we can connect with their needs (e.g., to matter, to be understood, to belong, to have choice), we can have compassion for them *because we have those same needs*.
- When we don't have the sense that our needs matter and that our choice is not cared for, we **REACT with defensiveness**
- Assuming innocence (people are trying to meet their needs, just like me) removes the obstacle (judgment, blame) for me (and the other person) to **RESPOND with compassion**



ENGAGEMENT AND CONNECTION

CALM IN CONNECTION

SETTLED

GROUNDED

CURIOUS / OPEN

COMPASSIONATE

MINDFUL / IN THE PRESENT

ABOVE (Response)

The Line (Of Choice)

BELOW (Reaction)

IMMOBILIZATION

FREEZE

HELPLESSNESS

DEPRESSION

SHAME

SHUT DOWN

MOBILIZATION

FIGHT

FRUSTRATION

IRRITATION

ANGER

RAGE

FLIGHT

WORRY

ANXIETY

FEAR

PANIC

Reacting (*unconscious action*) vs. Responding (*conscious choice*)

If I think a colleague is being “unprofessional” (i.e., a judgment), I am more likely to react (from below the line) rather than respond.

- My comment will come from a place of unaware judgment or frustration
- Will likely stimulate feelings of shame or anger in the other person, too

If I consider the needs (e.g., understanding, consideration) beneath the judgment (“unprofessional”), I can recognize and own my experience which allows more choice to respond (from above the line)

- My comment will come from a place of awareness
- I can choose a response which aligns with what is important to me (e.g., care, consideration, respect)

What are some judgements you've heard
in your work setting about clients?

Translating Judgments Into Feelings and Needs

Judgment	My Feeling(s) <i>Feelings point you in the direction of what you need</i>	My Need(s)
Uncaring		
Disrespectful		
Rude		
Unappreciative		

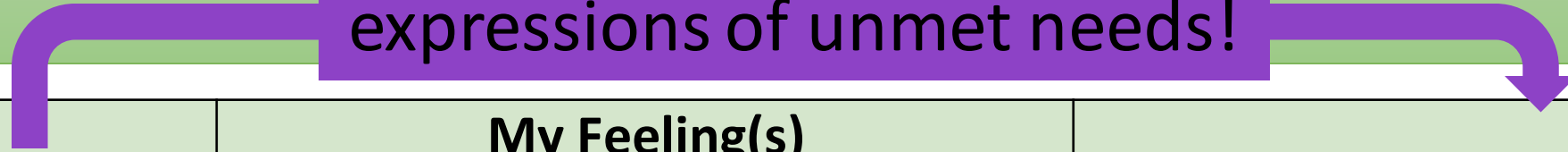
Translating Judgments Into Feelings and Needs

Judgment	My Feeling(s) <i>Feelings point you in the direction of what you need</i>	My Need(s)
Uncaring	Disappointed, startled, withdrawn	
Disrespectful	Shocked, detached, furious, uncomfortable	
Rude	Disappointed, overwhelmed, sad, shocked	
Unappreciative	Angry, hurt, frustrated	

Translat

Judgments are tragic expressions of unmet needs!

ings and Needs



Judgment	My Feeling(s) <i>Feelings point you in the direction of what you need</i>	My Need(s)
Uncaring	Disappointed, startled, withdrawn	Care, compassion, consideration
Disrespectful	Shocked, detached, furious, uncomfortable	Understanding, acknowledgment, recognition, compassion
Rude	Disappointed, overwhelmed, sad, shocked	Cooperation, understanding, respect, friendliness
Unappreciative	Angry, hurt, frustrated	Appreciation, respect, acknowledgment, consideration

Translating judgments into feelings/needs
helps us shift from the perspective of
“what’s wrong” to “what’s important”

Individual Work: Translating Judgments Into Feelings and Needs

Judgment	My Feeling(s) Feelings point you in the direction of what you need	My Need(s)

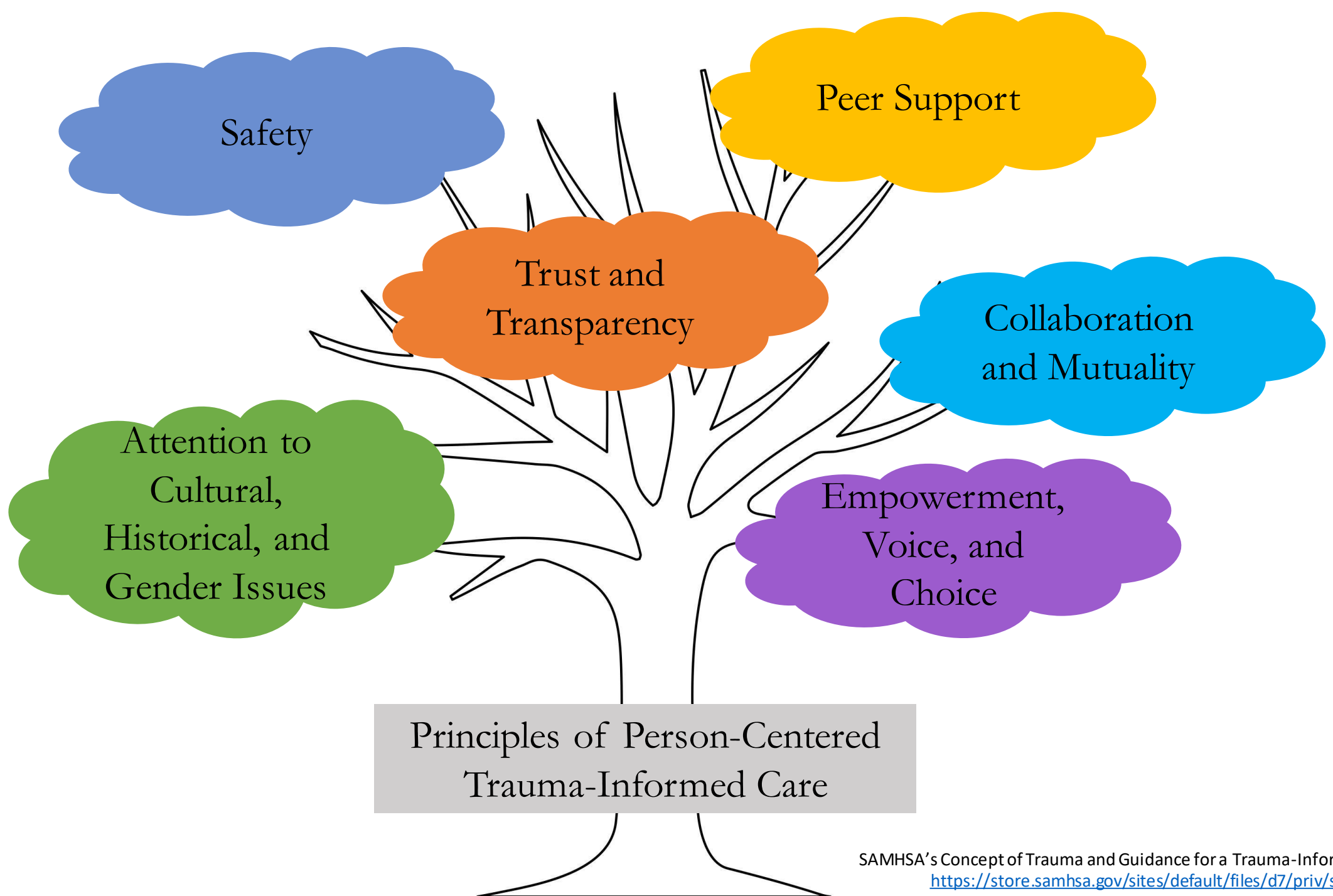
“Changing the outward focus of labels and judgments to an inward orientation of feelings and needs could revolutionize the health care system.”

~Melanie Sears RN, MBA, PhD

The background features several large, overlapping speech bubbles in shades of yellow, pink, orange, dark blue, and green with a textured pattern. At the bottom, there is a row of five stylized human figures in profile, representing diverse individuals with different hair colors and styles, and clothing colors.

GROUP EXERCISE

Discuss if and why translating judgments supports each PCTI principle



Principles of Person-Centered Trauma-Informed Care

Translating Judgments Supports Each PCTI Principle

Trust - we reclaim a person's humanity; we see them as human, and they can trust and relax (instead of being guarded)

Safety – a person can be safe to be who they are because they trust

Collaboration and mutuality - builds trust that they matter, of being heard and understood, and can show up for collaboration.

Empowerment – moves us back to power and being responsible for our feelings and needs.

Translating Judgments Supports Each PCTI Principle

Voice – when I share my deeper truth (what I need, what's important), my voice is more likely to be connecting and impactful and I am more likely to be heard

Choice – I can advocate better for myself, and my voice is more compelling because I've reclaimed my power

Peer support – removes the obstacles (judgements) and moves us toward collaboration, trust, and safety

Attention to cultural, historical and gender issues – removing stigma and bias is a powerful part of our liberation work



Making a request: A powerful NVC practice

Your supervisor says,
“You have to reschedule your afternoon and
come to this meeting in 30 minutes.”

Does anyone have an idea of the difference
between a demand and a request?

What is a Request?

Anything we would like others to say or do in support of our needs



Why do people make demands? ("should's" and "have to's")

The reason why people make demands is because we grow up with a paradigm of:

- Mistrust – we do not trust that we matter
- Believing that other people will not want to care for our needs, so we try to “motivate” them to care for us with demand energy
- Believing that if we use demands, it increases the chance that people will do what we want them to do

When a person perceives a demand, one of two things happens:

- 1. Submission** - agreeing to a request without true willingness
 - Agreeing out of fear, guilt, shame, obligation or desire for reward compromises the quality of connection and trust between people
- 2. Rebellion** – people tend to rebel after experiencing resentment and oppression from submitting and denying their own choice

Submit



Rebel

Power Differences Impact Choice and Voice

(e.g., boss-employee, case manager-client, provider-patient)

- Can make it difficult for some people to say “no”
- Can make it hard for some people to make a request at all

Why Choose to Make a Request and Not a Demand?

A true request increases the likelihood that the other person will experience choice in their response

- Builds trust that everyone's needs matter

When everyone's needs matter, people usually have more willingness to support one another in getting everyone's needs met

Key Points To Making a Request

- 1. A request is not a demand** – *“Would you tell me what the obstacles are to keeping these home visit appointments?”*
 - Demand – denying the other person’s choice, expecting that they must do as you say/wish
 - A true request means you are open to hearing a NO without punishment or negative consequences (e.g., shame, anger, interrogation, guilt-tripping, silent treatment, etc.)
- 2. A request is do-able**, it’s clear what you want the person to do or say
 - NOT do-able, *“Would you collaborate with me to arrange your schedule?”* because you are not saying exactly what you’d like them to say or do that is collaborative (in your mind)
 - DO-able, *“Would you tell me what the obstacles are to keeping these home visit appointments?”*
- 3. A request uses positive action language** - express what you *do want* rather than what you don’t want (How can we do a don’t?!)
 - When we focus on what we don’t want, we tend to create resistance and confusion AND we contribute to reproducing it!
 - *“Don’t cancel your home visits on the day of the visit.”*
 - What about *“Please, do not cancel your home visits on the day of the visit?”*

Every Request is Actually TWO Requests!

- 1) **Explicit** request - what I want the other person to do or say
- 2) **Implicit** request – wondering inside “Do I matter?”
 - Because our mattering is so wounded, it’s sometimes unbearable to imagine hearing a NO (*if it means to me that I don’t matter*)
 - Can be vulnerable and scary when I put my mattering at the mercy of the other person (i.e., Yes, I matter **or** No, I don’t matter)

This concept can help clarify a lot about why making a request is so hard.

If we don't trust that we matter...

- It's less vulnerable to choose a demand rather than offer a choice and hear a no
- When I hear a demand from another person, it helps me understand that person might believe they have less power or mattering (which is why they resort to demand energy)

What happens if you receive a NO to your request?

- NO is not the end of the dialogue, it's only the beginning
- It's a "YES" to other needs and an opportunity for me to connect with the needs the person is saying *yes* to
 - Find a new request that includes those needs as well my own!
- There are many strategies to meet needs. If someone says no, I can always look for another strategy
 - Hold the need tightly, the strategy lightly.
- I won't give up my need, but I can live with an unmet need. I can continue to look for ways to move towards my needs, to make new requests, to make new strategies, and to ask for support
- It's my responsibility to create the conditions for my needs to be met. There is so much I can do on my end to invite care from others

GROUP EXERCISE

Consider each component of making a request and discuss what PCTI principles it upholds



Making Requests Supports PCTI Principles

Components of a Request

Not a demand

- Open to hearing a NO without punishment or negative consequences

Is do-able

- Clear what you want the person to do or say

Uses positive-action language

- Express what you do want rather than what you don't want

PCTI Principles

- Safety
- Trust and transparency
- Collaboration and mutuality
- Peer support
- Empowerment, voice, and choice
- Cultural, historical, and gender issues

A stylized illustration featuring a group of five diverse people at the bottom, shown in profile and facing right. Above them are four large, overlapping speech bubbles in various colors and patterns: yellow with a floral pattern, light pink, orange, dark blue, and green with a leaf-like pattern. The background is a solid light gray.

GROUP EXERCISE

Create more requests based on our scenario and discuss whether they meet all three components

You are meeting with a couple in their home to discuss their service plan. In the past three months, they have declined multiple home visits from different team members and then request schedule changes. One spouse has had significant health changes, including hospitalization. Adult children are supportive but busy with their families and work. Everyone is frustrated and you are spending several hours a month managing scheduling complications.

Ideas for How to Language a Request

- Would you be willing to...
- Would you mind...
- Are you comfortable with...
- Would it work for you...
- How about if...

The three components to a request:

1. Not a demand
2. Do-able
3. Positive action language

GROUP EXERCISE

What might prevent you from making a request?



Some Common Fears and Beliefs Which Keep Us From Making Requests

- I fear the pain of hearing rejection.
- I fear the pain of being hurt or angry if the other person says “No” to me
- I fear the pain of being viewed by others in ways I don't want to be viewed (needy, manipulative, greedy, ignorant, demanding, aggressive)
- I fear the pain of viewing myself in ways I disapprove (same as above)
- I believe that I do not deserve what I am requesting.
- I believe the other party lacks the capacity to satisfy my request.
- I believe that I should be self-reliant and able to cope without asking for help.
- I believe that the other person should know what I want without my having to ask for it.
- I believe that it is disrespectful or inconsiderate to put people in the potentially uncomfortable position of “have to say ‘No’.

A Perspective on Time

We are socialized with perceptions around time (that emphasize scarcity thinking)

- I don't have enough time.
- There isn't enough time.

“Instead of saving time up front and losing it later, the choice is to invest time up front and harvest the results later.”

(Miki Kashtan in *The Highest Common Denominator*)





I hope you will consider what I've offered in this session, experiment with it, and decide if and how to apply it in your life. I believe that change often requires some discomfort and willingness to try things that may not make sense at first. I hope you will find inspiration to explore new possibilities.

Paige

These words by Roni Wiener and Magda Baranska in a Convergent Facilitation course inspired me.

Take Aways

- PCTI are the principles and NVC is the language, tools, skills, and the practice to connect with our shared humanity
- Staff have deep intention to care but can say and do things that block care
- Everything human beings say and do are an attempt to meet one or more of their shared human needs
- We are socialized to argue, judge, blame, and to block empathy; the assumption of innocence is the antidote
- Translating judgments helps us shift from “What’s wrong?” to “What’s important?”
- Making a request, instead of a demand, is based in choice and supports us in getting everyone’s needs met



Snowball time!

Thank you for sharing part of your day with me.
Paige

The word "RESOURCES" is written in a large, white, 3D sans-serif font, centered horizontally. The letters have a slight drop shadow, giving them a floating appearance. The background is a vibrant, abstract composition of overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various colors including blue, green, yellow, orange, pink, and purple. Some of these shapes are outlined with dashed lines in colors matching their fill. The overall aesthetic is modern, colorful, and dynamic.

RESOURCES

Resources

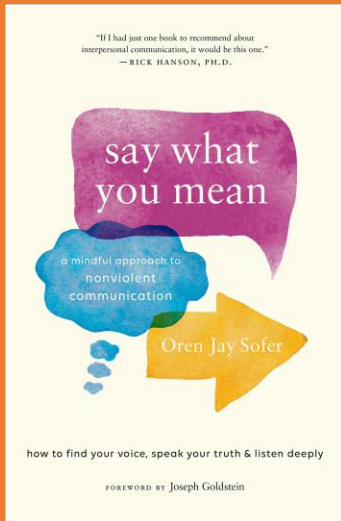
NVC Academy, <https://nvctraining.com/>

- A variety of free materials

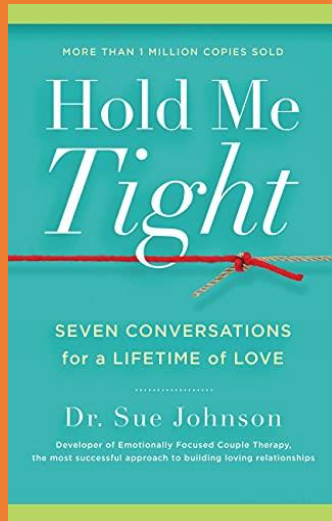
Bay Area Nonviolent Communication (NVC), <https://baynvc.org/>

- Blog and free worksheets

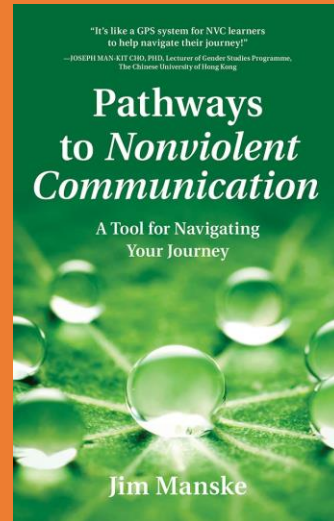
Additional Book Recommendations



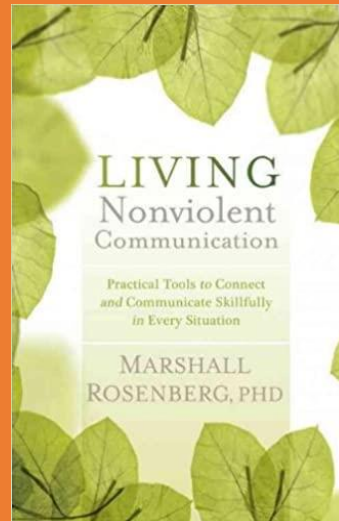
Oren Jay Sofer



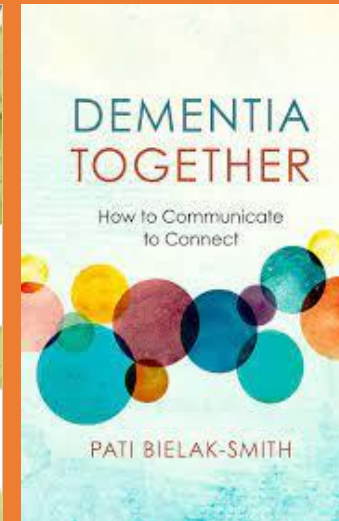
Dr. Sue Johnson



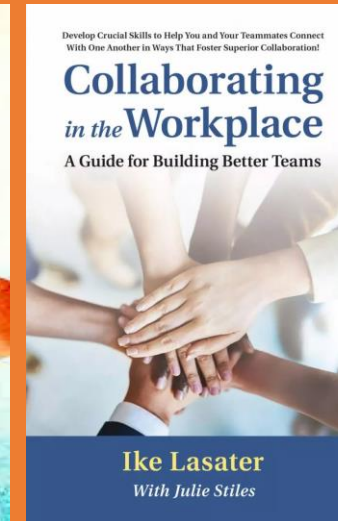
Jim Manske



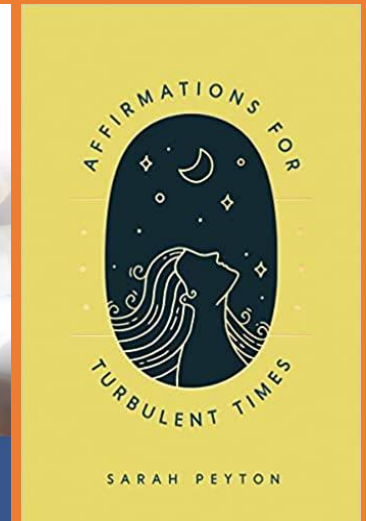
Marshall Rosenberg



Pati Bielak-Smith



Ike Lasater



Sarah Peyton

Growing Your Community Around Empathy (GROK card games)



<https://groktheworld.com/>

*GROK is from the novel *Stranger in a Strange Land*, by Robert Heinlein and means “to deeply understand”

Dr. Yvette Erasmus

clinical psychologist,
teacher, writer

Resources and Blog,

<https://www.yvetteerasmus.com/>

YouTube Channel,

<https://www.youtube.com/c/YvetteErasmusPsyD>

