

# Contents

Foreword by Deepak Chopra, MD	xiii
Acknowledgments	xvii
<b>1 Giving From the Heart • 1</b>	
Introduction	1
A Way to Focus Attention	3
The NVC Process	6
Applying NVC in Our Lives and the World	8
NVC in Action: “Murderer, Assassin, Child-Killer!”	13
<b>2 Communication That Blocks Compassion • 15</b>	
Moralistic Judgments	15
Making Comparisons	18
Denial of Responsibility	19
Other Forms of Life-Alienating Communication	22
<b>3 Observing Without Evaluating • 25</b>	
The Highest Form of Human Intelligence	28
Distinguishing Observations From Evaluations	30
NVC in Action: “The Most Arrogant Speaker We’ve Ever Had!”	32
Exercise 1: Observation or Evaluation?	34
<b>4 Identifying and Expressing Feelings • 37</b>	
The Heavy Cost of Unexpressed Feelings	37
Feelings versus Non-Feelings	41
Building a Vocabulary for Feelings	43
Exercise 2: Expressing Feelings	47

## **5 Taking Responsibility for Our Feelings • 49**

- Hearing a Negative Message: Four Options 49
- The Needs at the Roots of Feelings 52
- The Pain of Expressing Our Needs versus  
the Pain of Not Expressing Our Needs 55
- From Emotional Slavery to Emotional Liberation 57
- NVC in Action: “Bring Back the Stigma of Illegitimacy!” 61
- Exercise 3: Acknowledging Needs 65

## **6 Requesting That Which Would Enrich Life • 67**

- Using Positive Action Language 67
- Making Requests Consciously 72
- Asking for a Reflection 74
- Requesting Honesty 76
- Making Requests of a Group 77
- Requests versus Demands 79
- Defining Our Objective When Making Requests 81
- NVC in Action: Sharing Fears About a Best Friend’s Smoking 85
- Exercise 4: Expressing Requests 88

## **7 Receiving Empathically • 91**

- Presence: Don’t Just Do Something, Stand There 91
- Listening for Feelings and Needs 94
- Paraphrasing 96
- Sustaining Empathy 101
- When Pain Blocks Our Ability to Empathize 103
- NVC in Action: A Wife Connects With Her Dying Husband 105
- Exercise 5: Receiving Empathically versus Non-Empathically 109

## **8 The Power of Empathy • 113**

- Empathy That Heals 113
- Empathy and the Ability to Be Vulnerable 115
- Using Empathy to Defuse Danger 117
- Empathy in Hearing Someone’s “No!” 120
- Empathy to Revive a Lifeless Conversation 121
- Empathy for Silence 123

## **9 Connecting Compassionately With Ourselves • 129**

Remembering the Specialness of What We Are	129
Evaluating Ourselves When We've Been Less Than Perfect	130
Translating Self-Judgments and Inner Demands	132
NVC Mourning	132
Self-Forgiveness	133
The Lesson of the Polka-Dotted Suit	134
Don't Do Anything That Isn't Play!	135
Translating "Have to" to "Choose to"	136
Cultivating Awareness of the Energy Behind Our Actions	138

## **10 Expressing Anger Fully • 141**

Distinguishing Stimulus From Cause	141
All Anger Has a Life-Serving Core	144
Stimulus versus Cause: Practical Implications	145
Four Steps to Expressing Anger	148
Offering Empathy First	149
Taking Our Time	152
NVC in Action: Parent and Teen Dialogue A Life-Threatening Issue	154

## **11 Conflict Resolution and Mediation • 161**

Human Connection	161
NVC Conflict Resolution versus Traditional Mediation	162
NVC Conflict Resolution Steps—A Quick Overview	164
On Needs, Strategies, and Analysis	165
Empathy to Ease the Pain That Prevents Hearing	170
Using Present and Positive Action Language to Resolve Conflict	172
Using Action Verbs	173
Translating "No"	174
NVC and the Mediator Role	175
When People Say "No" to Meeting Face to Face	181
Informal Mediation: Sticking Our Nose in Other People's Business	182

## **12 The Protective Use of Force • 185**

When the Use of Force Is Unavoidable	185
The Thinking Behind the Use of Force	185
Types of Punitive Force	186
The Costs of Punishment	188
Two Questions That Reveal the Limitations of Punishment	189
The Protective Use of Force in Schools	190

## **13 Liberating Ourselves and Counseling Others • 195**

Freeing Ourselves From Old Programming	195
Resolving Internal Conflicts	196
Caring for Our Inner Environment	197
Replacing Diagnosis With NVC	199
NVC in Action: Dealing With Resentment and Self-Judgment	204

## **14 Expressing Appreciation in Nonviolent Communication • 209**

The Intention Behind the Appreciation	209
The Three Components of Appreciation	210
Receiving Appreciation	212
The Hunger for Appreciation	214
Overcoming the Reluctance to Express Appreciation	215

**Epilogue** 217

**Bibliography** 220

**Index** 223

<b>Resources:</b> The Four-Part Nonviolent Communication Process	231
Some Basic Feelings and Needs We All Have	232
About Nonviolent Communication	233
About PuddleDancer Press	234
About the Center for Nonviolent Communication	235
Trade Books From PuddleDancer Press	236
Trade Booklets From PuddleDancer Press	242

**About the Author** 244