



Nonviolent communication roleplay

Time

90 minutes

Materials

Flipchart, pens, handy props.

Related tools

De-escalating violence

Purpose

To introduce basic principles of nonviolent communication and experience using them.

Preparation

Prepare a flipsheet with the four components of NVC, and basic sentence construction (described over). Practice with your co-facilitator a short (2-minute) confrontational scenario in two different ways: 1) aggressive and judgemental, and 2) using nonviolent communication. It could be something like Person A coming home to an untidy house. Person B, home all day, had promised to tidy-up for Person A's evening guests. Person A challenges B about why it hasn't been done. A few props make it more authentic.

Description

Introduce the session by describing what will happen:

Part 1) you and your co-facilitator will play out a skit (roleplay); the group will observe and discuss;

Part 2: they will devise their own skits to explore nonviolent communication. If time is an issue, you could cut this. But its full value comes from participants doing it themselves and reflecting back on it.

Present your short skit using violent/ aggressive language/ body language. Then repeat with the nonviolent version.

Ask participants how they felt, what they noticed. What was the difference between the two role plays? Ask what they noticed about the language, including body language. How was it different? Try to get into the detail. List what is said.





Ask if anyone has heard of nonviolent communication (NVC) and what they can say about it. Pick up from whatever comes out and describe the concept, explaining that this introduction strips it to right down to a practical way of formulating language. It's not the whole thing, but a simple introduction. Introduce on a flipsheet the four components of NVC:

1. Observation: what is happening, describe it without judgement.
2. Feelings; how do you feel? What do you think the other person feels?
3. Needs; what do you need? Acknowledgement, affirmation, support, security, belonging, freedom? What do you think the other person needs?
4. Request; make a request that is specific, concrete and do-able.

Introduce the flipsheet with the basic sentence construction:

When

I feel ...

Because I need ...

Would you be willing to ...

Invite the group to construct sentences using this formula and call them out.

Part 2

When you can see they've got the idea, invite participants to get into pairs. Ask everyone to think of a time they had a confrontational experience that upset them, share it with your partner/ group and choose one to role play. Allow

- 5 minutes to think of the experience, share it and choose the one to go with.
- 20 minutes to practice their skit in the same way as you and your co-facilitator, ie first time as you remember it happening, second time using nvc.
- 5 minutes performing the skit to the rest of the group. Do them one after the other.

Debrief

After all of the sketches are done, come back to the whole group.

How was that? How did that feel each time?

Once the surface feelings and thoughts have been shared, ask what people noticed about the two experiences. What came out for you?

How useful might this be for you? How will you use it?

