



# Barriers to Communication

## NVC Chapter 2: Communication That Blocks Compassion

### While you are waiting...



Think of something someone said to you that stopped communication. Or think of something that you said to someone that stopped communication. Write one of these trigger statements below.

### Check-in (breakout room activity):



Introduce yourself and share your statement. Categorize your phrase into the three types of barriers to communication below.

### Three Barriers to Communication

From People Skills, by Robert Bolton

Judging	Giving Advice	Avoiding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Correcting:</b> "I think you meant..."</li><li>• <b>Criticizing:</b> "It will never work. We tried it 5 years ago."</li><li>• <b>Name-calling and labeling:</b> "Are you nuts?"</li><li>• <b>Evaluating or Analyzing:</b> "I know he was trying to make me look bad."</li><li>• <b>"Us" versus "Them":</b> "I can't believe THEY did that!" "Another example of their incompetence!"</li><li>• <b>Manipulative Praise:</b> "You did such a good job! Would you do another favor for me?"</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Giving Advice:</b> "Have you thought about..." "Did you ever try..."</li><li>• <b>Fixing or Educating:</b> "There's a video on this."</li><li>• <b>Interrogating, excessive or closed questions:</b> "Did you finish it? Why isn't it done? Can you get it done today?"</li><li>• <b>Moralizing:</b> "If you cared about your children, you would..."</li><li>• <b>Threatening:</b> "You WILL get that project done, or you'll be sorry."</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Diverting:</b> "That reminds me of a time when I..."</li><li>• <b>Explaining or using a logical argument:</b> "I don't care, the facts are..."</li><li>• <b>Consoling or unrealistic reassuring:</b> "I'm sure everything will work out OK."</li><li>• <b>Interrupting:</b> "...hey, (interrupts) I've got another idea... how about ...."</li><li>• <b>Telling a better story:</b> "Wait 'til you hear what happened to me...."</li><li>• <b>Shutting down:</b> "You need to grow up." "Think of what the others feel..."</li></ul>

### Why we use barriers

Why do we do this? What are the benefits and consequences?



# What's Behind the Judgmental Thinking?

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### Connecting to needs behind judgments (breakout room activity):

1. **Stimulus:** The player will share their trigger statement (see p. 1).
2. **Player's feelings:** The partners will offer empathy by guessing feelings. The player will silently receive the feelings guesses. Tell the partners which feelings most resonate.
3. **Player's needs:** Based on the feelings, the partners will offer needs guesses. The player will silently receive the needs guesses and choose the ones that resonate.
4. **Empathy for self:** Having chosen the feelings and needs that resonate, the player will say aloud the training wheel sentence: "When I hear \_\_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_\_ because I need/want \_\_\_\_\_."
5. **Connect to the need:** Now that the player has identified a need, take a moment to connect with this need. *What would it be like to have this need met?*
6. **Empathy for other:** From this space, are you (the player) willing to guess the feelings and needs behind the [stimulus]? If so, repeat steps 2 through 4 for the other person, saying at the end "When they said\_\_\_\_, I wonder if they felt\_\_\_\_ because they wanted/needed\_\_\_\_."
7. **Connect to the need:** Now that the player has identified a need for the other person, take a moment to connect with this need. *What would it be like to have this need met? Look at the stimulus again; does it feel any different now?*



**Debrief:** What was this exercise like for you? Unmute yourself to speak to the large group.

**One-word checkout:** Say your name and share your one word with the rest of the group.





# Summary

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