



# Have To vs. Choose To

## NVC Chapter 9 (Part 2): Connecting Compassionately with Ourselves

### Directions:

1. Write down something that you do because you are telling yourself you “have to” in the box below.

**I have to** (Example: *I have to drive the children to school.*)

2. Next, change the “I have to...” to “I choose to...”

**I choose to** (Example: *I ~~have to~~ I choose to drive the children to school.*)

3. On page 2, write down some thoughts that come up when you think about the thing you are choosing to do.
4. Notice the **sensations** and **feelings** that come up for you around these thoughts.
5. What **needs** are these feelings and sensations pointing to? You may notice that some of these needs are met by choosing to do the action, and some needs may not appear to be met by this choice. You may want to reevaluate your choice now that you have some clarity around needs met or not met by the action.
6. Test out your choice by trying out some of the phrases below, using the needs you have identified:

### Option 1:

I choose to \_\_\_\_\_ because I value \_\_\_\_\_. I wish I could think of a way to meet my need for \_\_\_\_\_.

*Example: I choose to drive the children to school in order to meet needs for nurturance and learning. I'm sad that this choice means getting out of bed earlier than I enjoy, so I will meet my need for rest by going to bed at 10 p.m.*

### Option 2:

I choose not to \_\_\_\_\_ in order to meet need(s) for \_\_\_\_\_.  
If this leaves unmet needs around the choice, you can add: I will meet my need(s) for \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

*Example: I choose not to assign grades in order to meet my need for clarity. I will meet the need for accountability with learning portfolios.*



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**Working with your partner:** Identify feelings and need that might be behind the thoughts. The aim is to translate the thoughts into feelings and needs.

Thoughts	Feelings/ Sensations	Needs

**So what?** -- What's alive in you? What did you learn?

**Now what?** – What are you going to do with this learning?