

Stages of Emotional Liberation

NVC Chapter 5: Taking Responsibility for Our Feelings

By the end of our 90-minute practice session, you'll be able to:

1. Spot where you (and others) are on the emotional liberation path.
2. Turn judgments into understanding by translating opinions and judgments into the feelings and needs behind them.
3. Guess another person's feelings and needs as well as our own.

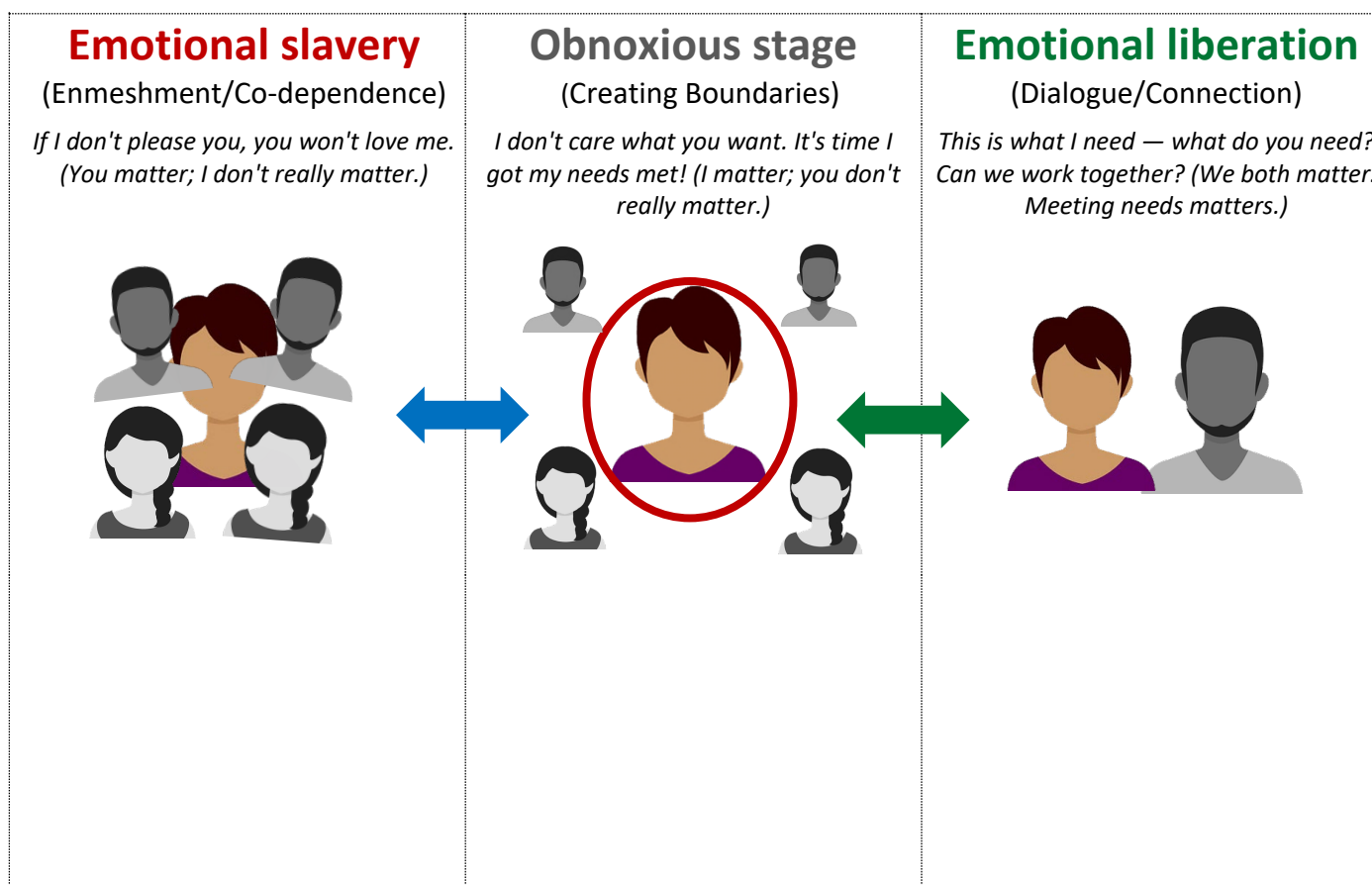
Before breakout #1: Think of a real-life situation.

1. Choose a situation that feels important or "alive" for you right now.
2. Write a few notes about what happened and how you feel about it.

Breakout room activity #1:

1. **Introduce yourself:** Start by sharing your name with your partner.
2. **Review the table:** Look at the Stages of Emotional Liberation table below.
3. **Sort your statements:** Try to place each statement into a column in the table. Here's a tip: In each statement, notice who matters most – Is it you, the other person, or both of you?
4. **Discuss with your partner:** Where do your statements fit in the table?

Stages of Emotional Liberation





Four Ways of Hearing

NVC Chapter 5: Taking Responsibility for Our Feelings

Large group demonstration: “You’re late!”

1

Hear blame and blame back.

Hear blame or judgment and blame or judge back.

2

Hear blame and blame myself.

Hear blame or judgment and blame or judge myself.

3

Listen for my feelings and needs.

Hear words and listen for my feelings and needs that come up when I hear the words.

4

Listen for the other person’s feelings and needs.

Hear words and listen for the other person’s feelings and needs.

Blame Game
Who’s at fault?
Who’s right?

What’s Needed Here?
What am I longing for?
What are you longing for?



Human beings have only two conversations:

“*Please*” [my need is not met – would you help me?] and “*Thank You*” [my need is met!]

Breakout room activity #2: Four ways of hearing

Breakout Room Roles:

1. **Player:** Explores and processes their own situation.
2. **Facilitator:** Guides the flow of the worksheet
3. **Empathy supporters:**
 - Silent witnessing: Sit with a quiet mind and an open heart, listening deeply with your whole being. Notice your own thoughts as they arise, and gently let them go, returning to presence.
 - Offering support: When invited, offer guesses about what feelings and needs might be present, using the provided sheet as a guide.



Four Ways of Hearing

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Breakout room activity #2 – cont'd

1. **Describe your situation as an observation:** Look back at the situation you wrote about on page 1. Describe what happened, focusing only on what you observed (not your opinions or judgments).
2. Notice your thoughts during the situation: What thoughts come into your mind about the situation?
 - Is there a thought that blames or judges the other person? (e.g., What's wrong with you?)
 - Is there a thought that blames or judges you? (e.g., Oh no, I really blew it this time!)



3. **Pay attention to your own feelings and needs:** Your partners will help you guess what feeling and needs might be behind your thoughts. When you figure out what you need, take a moment to sit with it and say aloud:

I'm feeling _____ because I need _____.

4. **Guess the other person's feelings and needs:** Try to imagine what the other person might have been feeling and needing when they acted as they did. Say aloud this sentence:

Is the person feeling _____ because they need _____?

Look at the original situation again.

Is it a **"Please"** (I have an unmet need) or a **"Thank You"** (My need is met)?

Summary:

- Notice how you react during a situation.
- Try to shift your focus from blaming (yourself or others) to understanding what needs are present.
- Aim to respond thoughtfully, instead of reacting automatically to judgments.