



# NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION:

Using the OFNR 4-Part Model to Navigate Difficult Passages in the Turbulent Waters of Organization Dynamics

*"It seems to me that whereas power usually means power-over, the power of some person or group over some other person or group, it is possible to develop the conception of power-with, a jointly developed power, a co-active, not a coercive power."*

- Mary Parker Follett

## By Ed Democracy

Complex title - simple model.

Organization dynamics often seem complex, yet, with some simple navigational tools, one can easily get a fix on where one is and where one is going. For example, I once read in a sociology textbook that most organizational dynamics reduces to task-oriented issues and socio-emotional issues. To some people, all this is common sense. To others, it is not. Some people are naturally more task-oriented, while others are more attuned to the socio-emotional.

We all come together to accomplish the tasks required to see the change we want to see in our world or neighborhood. However, what determines how long we will all stay together is how we feel when we are together. The more enjoyable a group the more people will want to be involved, the more tasks will get done more easily, (*"Together everyone achieves more."*) the more fun, the more people, etc.. The group dynamic will move onward & upward in an ever-opening life-spiral. Task-efficiency is important, but, it is socio-emotional sustainability that will determine the health, well-being, and longevity of an

organization.

The Center for Nonviolent Communication will put you on the leading edge of the skills and knowledge necessary for organizational sustainability. Their website is [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org) and they also have their own dedicated WIKI where I found the following description of their 4-part model ( [http://en.nvcwiki.com/index.php/Four\\_part\\_model](http://en.nvcwiki.com/index.php/Four_part_model) ) :

The four part model of Nonviolent Communication is sometimes referred to as "OFNR" because the four components are called Observation, Feeling, Need and Request.

### 1 Observation

The Observation(s) of concrete facts of a situation, free of judgment, guilt, blame or shame.

### 2 Feeling

The Feeling(s) stimulated by the observation

### 3 Need

The Need(s) that caused the feeling

*Imagine connecting with the human spirit in each person in any situation at any time*

*Imagine interacting with others in a way that allows everyone's need to be equally valued*

*Imagine creating organizations and life-serving systems responsive to our needs and the needs of our environment*

- Marshall B. Rosenberg

### 4 Request

A specific Request that is positive, concrete and can be done right now to serve the Need(s) discovered. An NVC Request can often easily be distinguished from a demand by what comes up if the answer is "No."

### Other principles

In NVC expression all four parts are used. When verbalizing empathy, often only the first three or even just the feeling and need are spoken.

There is an out, in, out pattern to the model - the observation is something concrete and specific out in the world, the feeling and need help you go as deep as possible with what's alive in you and/or others, and the request is

about manifesting as specifically as possible out in the world again.

There may be similarity between OFNR and "Active Listening" at first glance. However, the OFNR approach of NVC might be considered Reframing of language rather than "Paraphrasing." This is because NVC translates thoughts, judgements and some linguistic elements of dialog into Feelings and Needs. NVC also includes the Observation which helps to distinguish facts from interpretations of them, and the Request which tends to move the dialog closer to discovering and sharing.

### FMI:

[www.can-so.org/chartingdemocracy](http://www.can-so.org/chartingdemocracy)

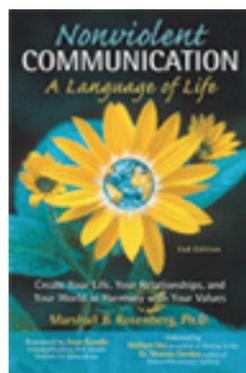
## HELPFUL LINKS

**The Center for Nonviolent Communication**  
<http://www.cnvc.org>

**NVC WIKI [Non-Violent Communication WIKIpedia]**  
<http://en.nvcwiki.com>

**NVC Quotes**  
<http://en.nvcwiki.com/index.php/Quotes>

**FREE BOOK EXCERPTS**  
<http://www.nonviolentcommunication.com/books/communication-training.htm>



## Winter Parking and Shoveling

### A Note from the MHNO Chair

The City's Parking Ban times now run from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., when a parking ban is called in the case of snow. During Parking Bans free parking can be found at the Cutter Street lots (off the Eastern Prom); snow ban parking will also be available at the Adams School site. Vehicles can enter these lots at 5 p.m. and must be removed by 7 a.m.

City ordinances now require property owners to clear the sidewalks from snow within 24 hours after a snowfall. Up to 10 gallons of free salt and sand for sidewalks are available at the parking lot at the corner of Marginal Way and Preble Street. To report uncleared sidewalks call 756-8393.

If you're having trouble driving up one of the hills in the neighborhood, you can find barrels of sand at the corners of Fox Street and Washington Ave, and at India and Congress Street.

If you feel this should be provided at another location on the East End please contact Public Services at 874-8493.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(Anyone can join the MHNO at any time)

COUNT ME IN! I WANT TO DO MY PART! (As a member you'll receive a monthly copy of the Observer by mail.)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (Please note: membership is for 1 year from receipt of dues)

Enclosed are my membership: **dues** /one year \_\_\_\_\_ **renewal dues** /one year \_\_\_\_\_

- |                                                       |                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Students & Seniors \$3.00    | <input type="checkbox"/> Observer Editorial                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Income Family \$6.00     | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership & Outreach                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Income Individual \$3.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$10.00               | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing, Transportation, & Environment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$ 5.00           | <input type="checkbox"/> Web Development                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$25.00             | <input type="checkbox"/> General Volunteer                      |

Enclosed is an additional (tax-deductible) donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**For statistical purposes only:** Please circle your ethnicity:  
White Black Hispanic Asian Native American Other Family Size?: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to MHNO & mail with form to:

**MHNO, 92 Congress St., Portland, ME 04101 Thank you!**