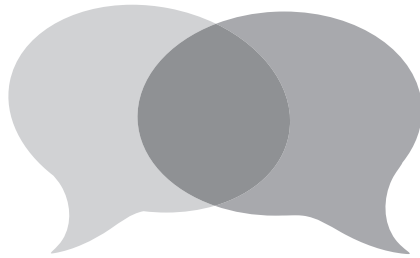


## PART II



### *Practicing Alone*



# *Practicing Alone*

In learning NVC, as with learning a foreign language, we first need to grasp the concepts—learn the grammar, so to speak—and then to practice on a regular basis. Fortunately, unlike foreign languages, NVC can be practiced anywhere and with anybody. We do not need an NVC partner to practice: we can practice when we cash a check at the bank, when another market researcher on the phone interrupts our dinner, when we listen to campaign speeches on TV, when the police officer stops us . . . We can practice with our parents and children, coworkers and bosses, friends, lovers, strangers, enemies, and—most importantly—with ourselves.

The challenge for most of us living busy lives is to commit time and energy and then to follow through. This workbook provides contents to help you structure a fourteen-week course to initiate your practice of NVC. After completion of the readings and assignments, you will hopefully feel confident in your understanding of NVC concepts and be familiar enough with practice approaches to be able to develop and maintain an individualized program of practice.

When committing to a course of study or practice on your own, it is helpful to be clear about how you hope to benefit, the commitments you are willing to make, the amount of time you will invest, and the regularity of your practice. As an individual embarking on a fourteen-week study period, spending time clarifying your goals and committing to specific times of practice can help ensure success. Writing down your goals and commitments to practice and reviewing your progress regularly may, in some measure, replace the encouragement you would receive through group practice, where others are there to support you in keeping your commitments. Many individuals have successfully used this workbook to develop deeper understanding of NVC concepts and greater fluency in their application, resulting in an increased capacity to relate to themselves and others with empathy and honesty.

Part IV of the workbook has three components: Assignments, Leader's Guide, and Sample Responses.

**Individual Assignments**—these consist of a “Reading Review” exercise and an “Individual Practice” exercise. Each of these exercises may be used by an individual as well as for group learning.

**Sample Response to Leader's Guide**—although designed for group experience, these sections are easily adapted for individual use. Throughout these sections we have included notes accompanied by the symbol © to help you as an individual work through them on your own. Additionally, once you have read the instructions for each activity, pause to listen to the “internal dialogue” that follows.

In order to take maximum advantage of the exercises in this workbook, consider establishing and staying committed to a scheduled routine. Sometimes the best of intentions are sidetracked by a schedule so flexible that it is no schedule at all. You might also wish to:

- Create a physical space dedicated to your practice of NVC. Select an area that affords whatever level of quiet and order you need to stay focused on the exercises you are committed to doing in your daily or weekly practice. You may want to find a place outdoors where you feel particularly peaceful and aware. Or, make a special place in a part of your living space where you keep items such as poems, pictures, or candles—anything that helps keep you in touch with that creative and passionate part of you that is motivated to do this work.
- Carry a notebook or electronic device with you, etc., every day as you interact in your world. From time to time, take a moment to jot down a few words that act as mental bookmarks and serve to remind you of any thoughts or interactions you want to consider at a later time.