

Randy. July 30, 2006 -2nd

This is another attempt to connect the depth of what world religious traditions tell us to practical behaviors for everyday life especially what healthy organizations need today to thrive.

This is as simple as living the Golden Rule- do unto others as you'd have them do unto you. However I've grown to have a much deeper understanding of this rule. And no longer see this as so simple.

"As long as people are motivated solely by self interest, they remain at a bestial level. But when they learn to live from the heart, becoming sensitive to the needs of others, the spiritual human being is born," Karen Armstrong states in *Great Transformation*. She continues, "the one and only test of a valid religious idea, doctrinal statement, spiritual experience, or devotional practice was that it must lead directly to practical compassion".

Buddha taught the practice of compassion, the release of the mind from the toils of self seeking is enlightenment. This can bring us into the presence of God. Compassion dethrones the ego from the center of our lives and puts others there, breaking the carapace of selfishness that holds us back from experiencing the sacred.

This compassion seems to be directed at the front half of the rule- do unto others. I'd like to examine more the second half. For me, paradoxically, it holds the key - As you would have them do unto you. Being admonished to eschew selfishness, I'm in a contradictory fashion asserting our diminished self is holding us back from truly living the Golden Rule.

There's a quote - that I've heard several times over the last few years that begins to capture some of the point I'm trying to make- it's only recently I've understood this and have made the connection to the Golden Rule.

"our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others". (Marianne Williamson)

This begs a host of questions; one I'd try to tackle is why our light frightens us? Marshall Rosenberg, who has devoted his life to the pursuit of peace, suggests as domination and hierarchy became the predominant way of life, 5-8 thousand years ago, a subtly of power and control was concentrated and it evolved a life alienating communication that stresses our innate evil and deficiency. We learned there was something wrong with whatever feelings and needs we were experiencing. As this plays out generation after generation, we learn early to cut ourselves off from what's going on within ourselves and renders a slave like mentality. The language of wrongness, should, and have to is perfectly suited for this purpose. The more people are trained to think in terms of moralistic judgments that imply wrongness and badness, the more they are being trained to look outside themselves- to look to authorities-for the definition of what constitutes right, wrong, good, bad. A minister friend recently suggested, perhaps this is what the Fall was about. We went from a sense of inherent goodness in ourselves and others to judging ourselves and others.

Rosenberg goes on to suggest that critical self concepts prevent us from seeing the beauty in ourselves, we lose connection with the divine energy that is our source.

So Rosenberg believes if we can break free of this dominator way of thinking, talking, acting, judging; we can engender compassion which he describes as the flow between myself and others based on a mutual giving from the heart. He says, "once we focus on what is observed, felt, and needed rather than diagnosing or judging, we discover the depth of our compassion. It's a gift when you reveal yourself

nakedly, honestly, at any given moment, for no other purpose than to reveal what is alive in you. Not to blame, criticize or punish. Just, here I am, and here is what I'd like. This is my vulnerability at the moment. This is a way of manifesting love. This is the Judeo Christian love your neighbor as yourself and judge not lest you be judged.

This repeating generational cycle of keeping our needs and feelings in the dark- from us and others- and the accommodating, spiritless ways of life engendered makes us very unaccustomed to this light. From this place of darkness it's hard to hear the Golden Rule as anything more than a rule to be followed and we stay oblivious to what our feelings and needs are which are really essential to live out the second half of the rule.

Perhaps the enigmatic admonishment of Jesus in Luke 14:25-26 "If any man comes to me without hating his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple" makes sense if we see it as leaving this conventional, accommodating world of darkness- moving beyond this world of hierarchy and extreme judgmentalism.

So it seems to me back to the practices that Armstrong mentioned in engendering compassion, I need to find in my heart what afflicts me and refrain from inflicting that pain on others. I also need to begin a practice of Kenosis (the emptying of self as suggested by St. Paul) in knowing all the self judgments I've heaped on myself. I need to transcend my frightened ego that often needs to wound or destroy others in order to shore up the sense of false self I've evolved in this dominator scheme of judging self and other. I need to gain access to what is alive in me-what is my light. Rosenberg suggests some universal needs- such as autonomy, interdependence, celebration, integrity, spiritual communion. In this world of darkness and fear of our light, we've seldom explored or pondered what these look like and how they ground us as Godly creatures. Are these needs what we like others to do unto us? In this discussion of why we've stayed in the dark and fearfulness of our light, I'm suggesting regaining this light can make all the difference paradoxically in living in spirited fashion the Golden Rule. Knowing what is healthy in wanting others do for us is a great start.

In considering the first half of the rule, Rosenberg suggests.. what a gift it is to be able to know at any given moment what is alive in someone- to receive their message empathetically, connecting what is alive in them and making no judgment. To see the beauty in the other through our presence in the moment. He goes on to suggest a practical spirituality (not that dissimilar to Armstrong's comment at the beginning) - the greatest gift of joy springs from connecting to life by contributing to our own and others' well being. Spirituality and love are more about what we do than feelings.

Living in a material world, I've shallowly seen compassion as the ultimate of giving - like giving the shirt off my back to even the enemy. I'm beginning to see compassionate giving is much more about a presence and empathic connection in a non judgmental way to the other or to my self. I'm not a fixer of others' problems or a dispenser of material but rather an honoring presence.

Basic Exercise

Think of a situation in which someone did or said something whose words were not real. Using the following versions of the NVC model and a separate sheet of paper, express yourself in writing based on what you have learned. (Go to pages 79-82 for feelings and needs words.)

1. When
(Write down a clear observation)
2. I feel
(Turn into feelings that are alive inside)
3. Because I need / want / value ...
(State the need that wasn't met)
4. Would you be willing ...
(Make a clear do-able request)

Example

"When you leave your dashboard in the front entrance, I feel concerned because I value people's safety. Am you willing to please your dashboard in the clear from now on?"

"When you tell me that I'm too demanding, I feel hurt because I need to be understood. Would you be willing to tell me how you feel hearing me say that?"

"When you turn in your report two days later than agreed, I feel irritated and disappointed because I value trust and integrity in our organization. Would you agree to do the following: whenever you experience a difficulty with workloads or deadlines, to discuss it with me immediately so that we can explore options together?"

"When you take a day from your sister while she's getting with it, I feel sad because I want us to be considerations of each other. Would you be willing to ask her whether she's willing to share it with you right now?"

How You Can Use the NVC Process

<p>Clearly reporting how I feel without blaming or criticizing</p> <p>OBSERVATIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What I observe (see, hear, remember, imagine, feel) from my environment that does or does not contribute to my well-being: "When I see, hear ..." 2. How I feel (emotion or sensation) rather than thought in relation to what I observe: "I feel ..." 3. What I need or value (deeper than a preference, or a specific action) that causes my feelings: "... because I need/value ..." <p>Clearly reporting that which would enrich my life without accounting</p> <p>REQUESTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The concrete actions I would like taken: "Would you be willing to ...?" 	<p>Empathically receiving how the life without feeling blame or criticism</p> <p>FEELINGS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What you observe (see, hear, remember, imagine, feel) from your environment that does or does not contribute to your well-being: "When you ..." 2. How you feel (emotion or sensation) rather than thought in relation to what you observe: "I'm ..." <p>NEEDS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. What you need or value (deeper than a preference, or a specific action) that causes your feelings: "... because you need/value ..." <p>Empathically receiving that which would enrich your life without having any demand</p> <p>REQUESTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The concrete actions you would like taken: "Would you be ...?" Because trust can often support
--	--


© Marshall Rosenberg, for more information about Marshall Rosenberg or the Center for Nonviolent Communication visit us at www.cnvc.org or www.marshallcnvc.org

Pink Hermeneutic cycle(church) Eval