

CO-CREATING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Taking Responsibility for How We Each Impact the Whole

Session Schedule: Day 1, Session 1

FOCUS OF WORKSHOP

The content of the workshop will focus on businesses and non-profits. While the material is applicable to any group with a shared purpose, we will focus our exercises, demonstrations and session topics on the issues and situations that are likely to occur in businesses and non-profits.

The skills we will be learning during the week mostly arise from either Nonviolent Communication or from Dynamic Self-Governance (aka DSG or Sociocracy). While these processes will be distinguished at times, they are largely integrated throughout the workshop. NVC is the music and DSG is the instrument on which we play to create the symphony of a needs-based, living organization.

The workshop focuses on applying Nonviolent Communication (NVC) skills in the workplace and on extending traditional intrapersonal and interpersonal NVC skills into group NVC skills and needs-based consciousness (e.g. “holding the needs of the whole”). We will not be teaching foundational NVC within the scheduled sessions of the workshop, but we do want to emphasize the importance of solid foundational NVC skills in applying the work presented in this workshop. As a “co-requisite” we encourage all participants to develop these foundational skills through workshops such as the NVC Training Institute’s Seven-Day Intensive on “The Living Energy of Needs.”

While strategies and structures will be presented throughout the workshop, what is fundamentally more important is the development of a needs-based consciousness through which these strategies and structures are implemented. The essence of this workshop is to lead you toward perceiving your workplace in a new way, perceiving your relationship to your workplace in a new way, and perceiving your relationships with others in your workplace in a new way. The strategies and structures without this consciousness are empty. We intend to live this needs-based consciousness as fully as we are able throughout the week together.

The workshop organizers present the material in this workshop as an ever emerging discovery of how to move toward a needs-based, living organization. We present it not as “fact” but as a reflection of our actual and dynamically evolving experience in real businesses and non-profits. We are students of this work just as you are. We value the experiences that each of you bring.

THE LEARNING CONTAINER

We are tangibly creating a container for mutual learning and community within our workshop.

This container changes depending upon, among other things, what intentions we each bring, where our attention is focused, what energy we are carrying within our selves, how we engage with one another, how we see and hold each other, how we hold the purpose for which we are here. Each one of us impacts this container, whether we do so consciously or unconsciously. Each of us is responsible for creating this learning and community container. The intention during the week is to be ever more conscious about how we show up within the group.

Because we value the purpose for which we are here and the time and resources we have each invested in coming here, **the facilitators intend to start sessions at the scheduled start time.** If you choose to participate in a session, we request not only your physical presence at the scheduled start time, but **we request that you come early enough so that you are consciously self-connected to your own intentions and to the purpose of the session before we begin.** We trust that our mutual experience together will be richer if we each show up fully.

In this workshop we request that each of us be responsible for our own need for empathy.

Learning to recognize when we are stimulated or disconnected and need empathy is a core skill of NVC. Within the large group sessions, we will recognize any person's need for empathy and support that person in being self-aware of that need, but **we do not intend to do empathy process work within the large groups.** We intend to create some structures within the workshop (just as we would within a business or non-profit) to support each person's need for empathy during the week. Among these structures are likely to be an empathy room and recognized empathy volunteers. We trust that participants will self-organize other structures as needed.

In this workshop we request that each of us be responsible for our own need for learning. The organizers of the workshop have created a workshop structure and content that we trust will fulfill the purpose of the workshop and contribute to the learning of each person attending. Session facilitators will at times choose to intervene or coach as integral actions to facilitate learning or to move the session back towards its purpose. We understand that these choices and actions may or may not actually contribute to your learning or to move us towards our mutual purpose. As organizers and facilitators, we ask for your feedback and will be specifically asking for your feedback in writing at the end of each day so that we can hear what is working for you and what is not working for you. This feedback helps us to learn how to better fulfill the purpose of the workshop and to contribute to your learning. **Each participant is invited to be clear about your personal intentions and learning objectives in being at the workshop, and to make conscious choices (e.g. which sessions to attend, when to take a personal break, etc.) about how to meet those intentions and objectives throughout the workshop.**

ENHANCING YOUR LEARNING EXPERIENCE

The concepts within this workshop are relatively simple to understand and remember. The challenge is expanding your consciousness and awareness. In my experience, this type of learning happens not by thinking your way through it, but by immersing yourself in experiences that invite you to expand. It is about “letting go,” not “cramming it in.” it is about moving from contraction to expansiveness ... moving toward self-awareness, self-compassion and self-responsibility.

Of all the approaches that may propel you forward toward living a needs-based consciousness, none has been as powerful for me as *moving toward my longing*. Letting go of any sense of “getting it right” and falling toward the center of my longing. Remember why you want to be here. Choose what will take you toward your longing ... and learn from those choices.

--Gregg Kendrick
March 13, 2009