



- Boundaries:** Each person has a right to physical and emotional boundaries. You decide what limits you have. You set your own boundaries. You have a right to have your limits respected. You also have the responsibility to respect the limits of others.
- Equality:** Each person has an equal share in decision making. Neither person is used selfishly by the other. The interests, opinions, and feelings of both people matter equally.
- Respect:** Respect holds boundaries, needs, feelings and equality with care. When boundaries are ignored and overrun, when communication breaks down, or when one person ignores the needs and feelings of the other, there is no respect.

The ability to relate to others is at the heart of being human.

The foundation of civilization is the cooperation (relationship) between groups of humans. Laws, customs, religion, education, and most work depend on interpersonal negotiation and agreements.

Relationships are what connect us to each other and they are the primary way through which we get our needs met.

In living, you are interdependent. If you lack healthy relationship skills, you will not be effective in getting your needs met.

Healthy relationships seek to enrich and expand the hearts, minds and spirits of those in relationship.

The basic skills in healthy relationships:

Speaking & Listening

compassionately!

Characteristics of Healthy Relationships:




The 4 characteristics of healthy relationships:

- each 'self' is free to express itself
vs. suppression of 'self'
- each is nonjudgmental
vs. moralistic judgments
- each has choice
vs. 'should', 'ought' & 'have to'
- each has freedom from inner & outer coercion
vs. punishment & control

Health Relationships =
AUTONOMY within **INTERDEPENDENCE**
(Boundaries)

Relationship RX

Use the following quick reference to help you remember how to communicate with compassion:

	SPEAKING SKILLS	LISTENING SKILLS
	Observation When I see / hear ...	Observation When you see / hear ...
	Feelings & Needs I feel ... because I need ...	Feelings & Needs Are you feeling ... because you need ... ?
	Request would you be willing ... ?	Request would you like ... ?

Practice using these skills each day, in all your interpersonal relationships. Journal your efforts, challenges and successes.

Based on the following: Rosenberg, M. (Puddle Dancer Press, 2003) Nonviolent Communication, 2nd ed. Compiled, written, and designed by Elizabeth Davis, LPCI www.elizabethdavis.net

Basic Skills:

The 5 basic relationship skills:

- asking for what you need *a speaking skill*
- hearing the request of another's need *a listening skill*
- saying no *a speaking skill*
- hearing no *a listening skill*
- handling needs collisions & other conflicts *a speaking, listening & cognitive* skills*

Speaking Skills:

Learn to say ...

- what you are observing that is fulfilling or not fulfilling your needs
- what you are presently feeling and needing
- what actions you request that will fulfill your needs
- your opinions and beliefs are expressed as just those, not facts



Observations:

Observations are description of what is seen or heard without added interpretations. For example, instead of "She's having a temper tantrum," you could say, "She is lying on the floor crying and kicking." If referring to what someone said quote as much as possible instead of rephrasing or paraphrasing.



Feelings & Needs:

Feelings are our emotions rather than our story or thoughts about what others are doing. For example, instead of "I feel manipulated," which includes an interpretation of another's behavior, you could say, "I feel worried." Avoid the following phrasing: "I feel like ..." and "I feel that ..." - because the words that follow those phrases will be thoughts, not feelings.



Requests:

Requests are doable, immediate, and stated in positive action language (what you want instead of what you don't want). For example, "Would you be willing to come back tonight at the time we've agreed?" rather than "Would you make sure not to be late again?" By definition, when we make requests we are open to hearing a "no", taking it as an opportunity for further dialogue.

**get input, explore options, and be creative in coming up with solutions that best meet individual and relationship needs*

Listening Skills:

Learn to listen for ...

- what others are observing that is fulfilling or not fulfilling their needs
- what others are presently feeling and needing
- the actions others request to fulfill their needs

Need Collisions & other Relationship Difficulties:

It is very likely that two unique individuals in any relationship will at some time have 2 colliding needs. Without taking another's freedom away, in a nonjudgmental way, you will need to negotiate.

It is also very likely that two unique individuals in any relationship will at some time have conflicting needs, ideas, or beliefs. Be sure to practice "Listening Skills" Ex:



- what others are observing that is fulfilling or not fulfilling their needs

"When you see/hear ... "



- what others are presently feeling and needing

"You feel ... because you need/value ... "



- the actions others request to fulfill their needs

"Would you like ... "

Then respond in a way that: honors your 'self', is 'nonjudgmental', offers the other and yourself 'choices', and never punishes or manipulates.

Empathy:

Empathy is being fully present (mindful) to what the other person is currently feeling and needing, and not losing that through a fog of "monkey mind" [a past/future excursion, diagnosis, or interpretation (judgement)].

SELF-EMPATHY is listening inwardly to connect with your own feelings and needs. This is the key to expressing your needs & requests and hearing the needs & requests of others.