

GROUP HANDOUT 14.3C

Expressing “No”: Instructions for Pair Practice

Make sure you have each written down one or several situations where you have (or had) difficulty saying “No” to someone. Take turns, giving each partner an opportunity to work through the following process:

1. Tell your partner two things, using one brief sentence:
 - a. What is being asked of you in this situation (to which you wish to say “No”)
 - b. What your relationship is to the person who is asking
2. Tell your partner the reason(s) why you have difficulty saying “No” in this situation. Again, be brief and state your reasons with just a few words.
3. Together with your partner, explore the needs underlying your reasons for why you have difficulty saying “No” in this situation. Remember that there may be several needs or layers of needs.
4. Finally, express “No” in NVC to your partner as if they were the other party in the situation.
 - i. Let them know that you hear their request as a gift. If you hear the need underlying someone’s request, we can see that they are extending an opportunity for us to use our power to meet a precious human need.
 - ii. Express the need that is preventing you from saying “Yes” to their request.
 - iii. Recognize the other party’s need and express your concern for how it may be met.
5. Ask your partner to orally reflect back all three elements of your “No”. Partners may use the formula, “I heard you say (i)..., (ii)..., and (iii)...”