

# Non Violent communication as a mission focus.



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## MISSION – in Jesus' footsteps??

The way Jesus interacted with people is a model of Non Violent Communication. In some very tense situations he refused to play the game of accusing and blaming people.

Mat 27:11 Jesus was brought before Pilate the governor, who asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "Those are your words!" Jesus answered.

John 8:7 They kept on asking Jesus about the woman. Finally, he stood up and said, "If any of you have never sinned, then go ahead and throw the first stone at her!"



Contemporary English Version, Second Edition © 2006 American Bible Society

## MISSION – in our days?

After 9-11 communication about groups (especially Muslims) in our society dramatically changed. There was an increase in blaming/ stereotyping/ rude and rough language. Some people call it increased discrimination.

It all happens in a time that there is an increased fear that "other people" damage our culture, identity and economy. Refugees, immigrants and migrant labourers experience the same problems.

In the Almere Mennonite congregation (near Amsterdam) members felt a need to contribute to better communication in their city. Communication for understanding is the key to better relationships between people and resolution of conflicts.

The congregation, together with Mennonite outreach project "Inloophuis De Ruimte", engaged in a project to form a team of trainers for NV communication skills. These trainers offered workshops to the wider Almere community.

A second project of the same setup recently started in the Dutch Mennonite congregation of Dordrecht.

### Essence of Non Violent Communication:

#### 1. Object of communication:

Violent Communication: speaking **about the other person** in negative terms. Blaming/ stereotyping,  
Non Violent Communication: Speaking **about yourself**. own perceptions/ feelings/needs/ wishes.

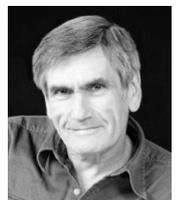
#### 2. Giraffe and Jackal.

When we are confronted with a conflict situation we start to feel unsafe. We tend to resort to survival behavior when fear becomes bigger.  
fighting (physical or verbal) , freezing, running away, giving in.  
Rosenberg labels these as "JACKAL BEHAVIOR"



When we feel safe enough we can communicate openly, share easily, be creative. To remain in this mode we need to follow the rules of Non Violent Communication.  
Rosenberg calls this "GIRAFFE BEHAVIOR"

Depending on FEAR we experience in a situation we switch between the two behaviors. Learning to see what happens in communication and learning the skills of the Giraffe we can reduce violent escalation in communication.



Marshall Rosenberg

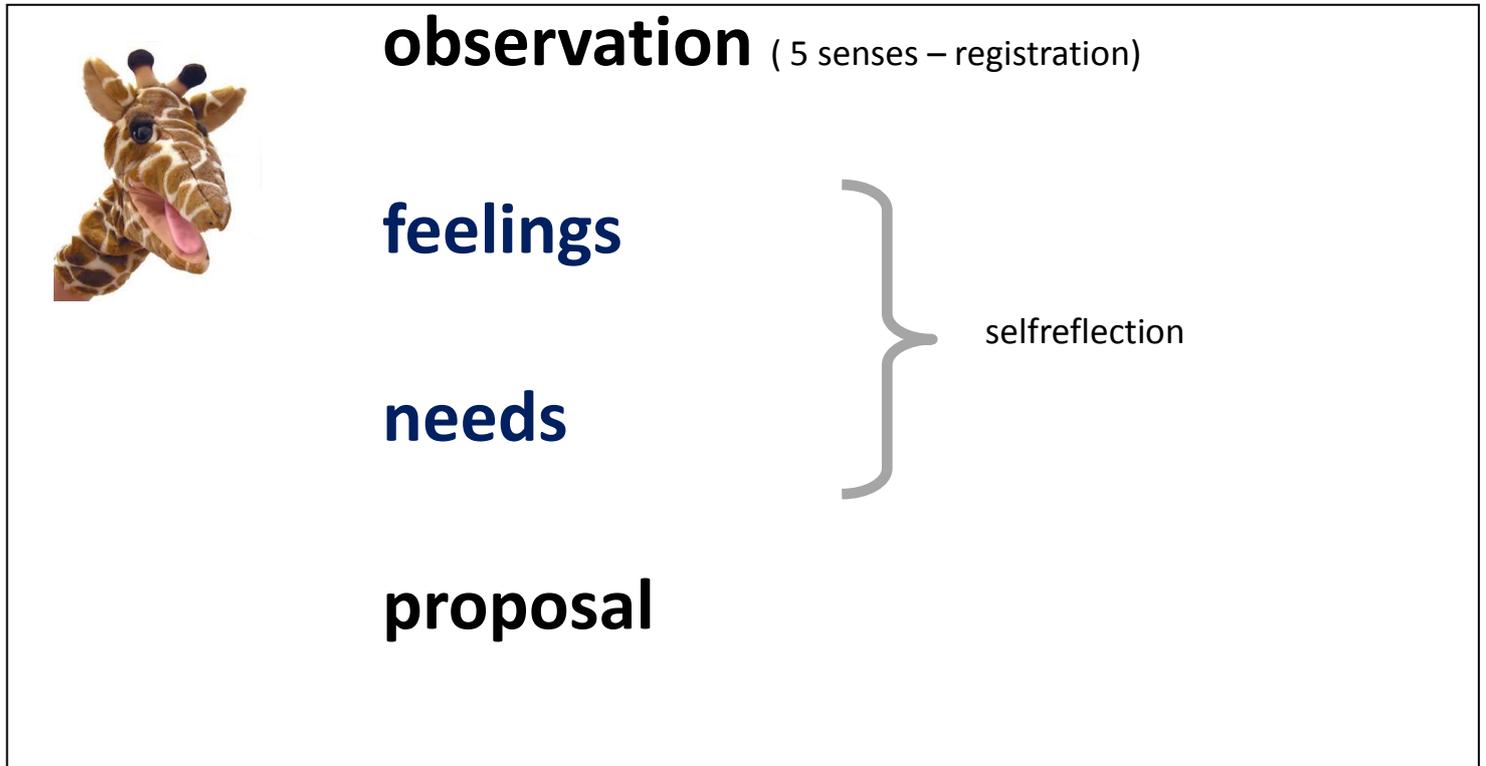
#### 3. Affirmation.

There are no bad people, There are bad deeds and behaviors. The person is 1000x more than one or even 10 bad events. There is a difference between DOING and BEING.  
Every person has something which can be appreciated.  
To put genuine AFFIRMATION into a tense situation of conflict will build bridges.

## STEPS of GIRAFFE COMMUNICATION

GIRAFFE communication is an exchange of: observations, feelings, needs and proposals. This process takes time and readiness for selfreflection.

The steps of feelings and needs are skipped by the JACKAL. Proposals become demands. This is a "quick" process, but it generally leads to win-lose or lose - lose solutions.



## INGREDIENTS for a PROJECT

### 1. Energy and passion

- At least 2 people who believe in the concept 105 %
- Support by minister and churchboard



### 2. Community to relate to

### 3. Knowledge/ skills

- Create a group of trainers/facilitators \*
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### 4. Organization

- Project implementation group
- PR - contact the community
- Money to cover project expenses
- Space to do workshops



\* find *Alternatives to Violence Project* trainers or Non Violent Communication Trainers to train your facilitators. .