

# Video 4 transcript

## *How do we use Mindful Communication?*

Hello again, and welcome to video 4; How do we use mindful communication? So in this one we're just going to look a bit more at how you might use it in your work. But also, you might like to think about how you use it in the rest of life, too, because it's not just for work!

When we meet somebody else's need, Marshall Rosenberg says, "There's a world of difference between doing something for others in order to avoid guilt, and doing it out of a clear awareness of our own need to contribute to the happiness of other human beings. The recognition that we've chosen to use our power to serve life and have done so successfully brings us the genuine joy of celebrating ourselves in a way that approval from others never can offer."

So we talked in the last video about our needs and our strategies. Needs are the really core values that motivate our actions; they're the things that matter most to us. The underlying reason why we want what we want, because we know we all have the same basic needs.

But strategies are what we use to meet the needs. They can be really useful or they might be really useless. Sometimes people have opposing strategies to meet the same need, and this is what I was mentioning last time when I said that if we have conflict, conflict will occur at the level of strategy and not at the level of need.

So, if we have an underlying need to feel valued at work, that's an actual need. But if we don't feel valued at work, then we know because we feel whatever we feel - we don't feel happy at work, we feel miserable. Because there's a need not being met there, using our barometer, if you remember the barometer of feelings and needs, and so we might come up with a strategy of, "I need a new job" - but "I need a new job" is a strategy, it's not a need, so I could have other strategies for meeting the need of feeling valued at work, but what my immediate one might be is "I need a new job".

So you remember last time we talked about how we needed to have a useful way of being able to express our needs effectively and we could use this formula:

*"I feel [whatever it is I'm feeling] when I'm seeing or I'm observing [whatever it is I'm observing] because I have this need for [whatever it is]. Would you be willing to [whatever it is that we need them to do]?"*

So for example, "I feel frustrated when I see you getting distracted when I ask you a question, because I have a need for us to communicate well. Would you be willing to be present with me so that we can work through this problem together?"

So if you have a think about this, have there been times when you've been in a situation where you've not expressed your needs well or somebody else hasn't expressed their needs well?

And how might you use this formula differently? How might you use it in your own language?

What happens when we have somebody who is angry with us? Behind all negative and intimidating messages are just people with unmet needs, making unuseful requests for us to improve their well-being. So, if we are feeling frustrated, or we're in the middle of concentrating on something because we have a need to get this thing done, and somebody comes into the room or interrupts us, then we might be angry with them, or we might express that anger - but actually we're not angry with them, we're angry because we have a need, and now we've been distracted; that's why we're angry.

So how might you express that as a means of usefully communicating that? How might you express that? Because our violence comes from the belief that other people cause our pain, and they therefore deserve to be punished in some way, but how if we were just to say, well, "I have a real need to concentrate on this right now, so would you be willing to just come back in five minutes and give me a chance to just be able to complete this piece of work please?"

If we accept that our anger isn't the other person's fault, because we can take responsibility for our own thoughts and feelings - it's the only thing we can take responsibility for, because nobody makes us feel or do anything. It's not the other person's fault and we can identify our judgmental thoughts. The other person's behaviour may have been the trigger but it wasn't the cause.

Connect with our own needs, connect with our own feelings, recognise I feel angry because I am needing something, not because they interrupted me, for example. And we can express our feelings and unmet needs *after* empathising with them. So we need to just take a little time before responding and we can look at what it was that actually happened...

So the other person came into the room and interrupted my work. This isn't the other person's fault. We can say, I appreciate the fact that you have a need for my attention right now, and we can have compassion for that, and we can appreciate the fact that they need my help. However, I have a need to get this done, so would you be willing to help me, and come back in five minutes? That way, everybody gets their needs met.

So, translating judgments into needs. So, if we think about what it is that annoys us about other people, and you can be as judgmental as you like in this particular exercise, because what you're going to do is to list the judgments that you really often make in your head using this phrase: "I don't like people who are..." what? So, for example, "I don't like people who are rude to me."

Okay? Just a judgment. You don't like it. And ask yourself, when I'm making that judgment about somebody, what is it that actually I'm needing and not getting?

And if I perceive people as being rude to me, what is my need? So actually, I have a need to be respected and valued.

It's quite a nice exercise this, because it helps us to reconnect with our responsibilities; the fact that this isn't somebody else making me feel this, this is my needs, and reconnecting with my needs.

And we can listen to what it is that other people are saying, too. So, what is somebody else feeling? So if you have somebody coming up to you who has a problem with one of the exhibits, for example, and they're really angry about it then we can translate in our heads - we can think, what is this person feeling?

Because clearly something is going on... I think they must be feeling angry - and what is it that they're needing? And again, we can translate in our minds what we think that this person needs from what it is that they're saying - what am I picking up?

And how am I feeling in response to this person? Now I might be feeling angry, because they're angry, and how very dare they be angry at me... so I get angry; but what needs of mine are behind those feelings? So I have a need, maybe, to be respected, to be valued in this job and they're shouting at me - but remember, they're not shouting at you, they're shouting because they're angry about something. This is an unuseful expression of an unmet need that they're displaying here - so I wonder what that need might be? So we can translate that inside our heads, because is this person's behaviour serving life or not? Probably not, in this instance. So, what is it that I can do to help this person to meet their needs?

I can understand them. I can say, I understand that you're feeling really angry right now and is that right? And I'm getting that you're feeling really angry because of this that you're talking about, it doesn't express your needs properly. Is that right? So what is it that I can do to help you meet those needs?

So, what is it that we're feeling when we want to use mindful communication for something?

What is it that we are being bothered by? What is it that you're seeing or hearing that's going on for you right now?

So, think about that and think about what is the need or the value of yours which underlies that feeling, so you need to make sure that you're taking responsibility for your own feelings and not blaming somebody else.

If you're using words like 'betrayed', for example, as a feeling; "I'm feeling betrayed." Betrayed isn't a feeling. Betrayed is, I'm making a judgement that what somebody else has done has affected me.

So, very interesting nuances about feelings. What is our actual feeling? I might be feeling, if I feel 'betrayed' that's again blaming somebody else. But what are my actual real feelings? I might feel sad, I might feel confused; those are my actual feelings, so we're not blaming anybody else for making us feel the way we feel. How can somebody else help me meet my need, or how can I help me meet my need?

What is it that I actually need? So for example, I feel frustrated because I have a need for our team to be efficient, and I'm concerned about meeting our deadline, so would you be able to finish this work by Friday?"

There we are. So that's, "I feel the feeling because I have a need for whatever it is that I have the need for and what I'm worried about so, yes, meeting our deadline. Would you be able to finish this work?" That's our concrete action plan.

So, thinking about what I've been talking about in this little video, how about having a reflection on some difficult conversation that you've had recently?

How would you understand it better by using mindful communication? How might you run it through this process? What might you do differently during and after?

It's very important that we take time before responding and we can't expect to be perfect at this, especially not just after these very short videos, but we can explore this process of translating judgements into unmet needs and, and thereby blame into understanding.

Because it's very important that we don't just react to things, that we respond to things, but obviously we can't be perfect at it. So it's important that we reflect on things after the fact, and to begin with, when we first start using this new way of communicating, we might be quite bad at it and then we might have to kind of think after the fact, "Well that didn't go well, what was it that I did that I could actually do better?" And the more you play with it, the more you rehearse it after the fact, then the more you're likely to be able to begin to use it in the moment.

And the more you use it in the moment, then the more other people will use it too. and here's our bibliography again and I hope this has given you some pause for thought and some new interesting skills and ideas to use.