

Day 9: Nonviolent Communication Practice (Observing Without Judgment)



A Guide by
Shree's Essencia

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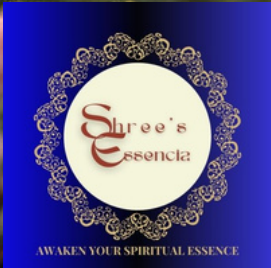
Day 9: Nonviolent Communication Practice (Observing Without Judgment)

Theme:

Observe someone's behavior without labeling it as "good" or "bad." Simply notice what is happening without attaching judgment or interpretation to it.

Story: The Quiet Garden

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It was a warm afternoon, and Sita sat under the shade of their old **neem tree**, her legs crossed beneath her, sipping a cup of tea as she watched Raj carefully tend to the **flowers**. His hands were steady, moving methodically as he **pruned the roses** and trimmed the hedges. The soft hum of the **garden** seemed to slow everything down, but Sita's mind was elsewhere.

All morning, she had been rushing from one **chore** to the next, trying to keep up with the **laundry, the dishes, and the bills**. She looked over at Raj again. He had been out there for hours, absorbed in the peaceful rhythm of **gardening**, and a quiet stirring rose within her—a mix of **admiration** and **frustration**, but mostly a longing for peace of her own.

Why doesn't he see that I'm drowning in tasks? she thought, feeling the familiar weight of **resentment** rise. He was lost in his own world, and she couldn't help but feel **frustrated**.

But as she sat there, her frustration slowly simmered down. She took a deep **breath** and let it out slowly, deciding to try something different. Instead of labeling his actions as “**careless**” or “**thoughtless**,” she simply watched him. She noticed the way his fingers delicately moved between the **leaves**, how he took his time with each plant, ensuring it was well cared for. His focus was complete, almost **meditative**. She realized, for the first time, that gardening wasn’t just a hobby for Raj—it was his way of **grounding himself**, a way of finding **peace**.

Sita’s heart **softened**. She could see the **care and attention** he gave to every **plant**, and she remembered how he’d always been the one to manage the **garden**, pouring his love into it season after season. It wasn’t that he didn’t **care** for her or the **home**; he just expressed his love differently. His act of tending to the **garden** was as much about his **need for peace** as it was about **nurturing something beautiful**.

When Raj came inside later that evening, the cool evening air wrapped around them, and the scent of **freshly cut flowers** lingered in the room. Sita looked up from the **stove**, where she was finishing **dinner**.

“I noticed how much time you spent with the **garden** today,” she said, her voice soft. “It’s really **beautiful**, how much **care** you put into it. I can tell it means a lot to you.”

Raj paused for a moment, surprised by the **warmth** in her words. He smiled, his tired eyes lighting up with gratitude.

“Thanks, Sita. It helps me **unwind** after a **busy week**.”

Sita hesitated but then decided to speak up about how she’d been feeling earlier. She didn’t want to **accuse** him or put him on the **defensive**.

“I’ve been feeling a bit **overwhelmed** today,” she admitted. “I guess I didn’t express it well, but I could really use some **help around the house**.

Sometimes I assume you know what I need, but I realize I haven’t been **clear** about it.”

Raj listened quietly, his expression open. He didn’t feel attacked or blamed; instead, he felt a sense of clarity.

“I get it,” he said, giving her a **reassuring smile**. “I’ll try to be more **aware** of that next time. Let me know how I can **help**.”

Together, they found a way to **balance both their needs**, laughing as they agreed to **share the tasks** in a way that worked for both of them. It felt good to speak openly, without **assumptions or judgments**, and it **deepened their connection**, creating a more **peaceful understanding** between them.

Reflection

Just like Sita, we can sometimes misinterpret others' actions through the lens of our expectations and judgments. By observing without labeling behaviors as "good" or "bad," we allow ourselves to see the situation with fresh eyes. This space for clarity and peace helps us step away from reactive judgments and fosters a more compassionate understanding of one another. Today, think about how you can apply this practice in your relationships, noticing actions without judgment.

Activity

1. Reflection:

Think about a **recent situation** where you may have judged someone's actions—whether it was a **family member, friend, or colleague**.

- How did you label their behavior?
- What assumptions did you make about their intentions?
- How might your perspective have shifted if you had simply observed the situation without judgment, allowing for a clearer understanding of the other person's experience?

2. Observing Without Judgment:

As you go about your day, consciously practice observing someone's behavior without attaching any judgment.

- Notice what is happening without labeling it as “good” or “bad.”
- For example, if you see someone on their phone while you’re talking, just observe the action: “They are looking at their phone.”
- Resist the urge to label it as “disrespectful.”

Why Observing Without Judgment Matters?

By **observing** others without **judgment**, we can respond with greater **clarity and compassion**. It allows us to see situations as they truly are—free from the lens of assumptions or emotional filters. This clarity helps us respond mindfully, with greater empathy and less reactive emotion, leading to more **harmonious interactions**. This practice fosters better communication and strengthens our relationships by reducing **misunderstandings and emotional triggers**.

Closing Thought

Observing without judgment isn't about ignoring our feelings or concerns—it's about creating the space to understand and communicate with others in a more thoughtful and compassionate way. By practicing this skill of non-judgment, we bring more empathy, openness, and harmony into our relationships. It deepens our connections, fostering not only peaceful conversations but also a sense of mutual respect and understanding.

Guided by the Bhagavad Gita:

The **Bhagavad Gita** teaches us to rise above **judgment and to cultivate non-attachment**, which includes **detaching from preconceived notions** or expectations of others. In **Chapter 6, Verse 5**, Krishna explains that the **mind can elevate or degrade** a person based on its conditioning. By letting go of **judgment**, we create space for **more balanced and compassionate communication**. Practicing **non-judgment** in communication fosters understanding and **harmony**, allowing us to connect with others without projecting our own biases.

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Relevance:

Observing without **judgment** allows us to communicate with clarity and without ego interference, creating an atmosphere of **mutual respect**. When we detach from judgment, we create space for **compassion and empathy**, helping to foster **deeper understanding in relationships**.

Thank you!

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