

NVCZen: Living in the paradox of both/And:

Fully asking for what we want, while letting go of having to have it.

“The things we desire are sacred, who put them in our heart if not god?” ~ Talmud

“The origin of suffering is attachment” ~ Buddha

Increase your need:

“The mouse-soul is nothing but a nibbler. To the mouse is given a mind proportionate to its need, for without need, the All-Powerful doesn't give anything to anyone.

Need, then, is the net for all things that exist: A person has tools in proportion to his need. So quickly, increase your need, needy one, that the sea of abundance may surge up in loving-kindness.”

~ Rumi

Liberation from shame:

We have been taught to be ashamed of what we want.

1. Having needs is seen as weakness because it is pointing to our vulnerability. 2.
- Not having needs - strength, self-sufficiency.
3. Shame - being 'needy'.

Distinction between:

- Selfishness
- Selflessness
- Selffulness

Letting go of attachment

What does it mean to release attachment and how do we do it?

Remaining open to either getting what we want or not.

Paradox: when we let go of having to have what we want we increase the chances of getting it.

The test of nonviolence

When we anticipate not getting what we want - either/or response:

1. Attempting to force what we want using shame, guilt, demands, threats, punishment, rewards.
2. Giving up on ourselves.

Both lead to suffering.

Needs as a fundamental unit of life

Needs don't go away, they just grow louder and bigger inside when not attended to, which leads to loss of choice and reactivity.

Cost: depression, isolation, despair, resentment, anger.

If you bring forth what is within you, what is within you will save you. If you don't bring forth what is within you - what is within you will destroy you".

~ Jesus

Wanting fully means:

1. Owning our needs and not denying or repressing them.
2. Not judging ourselves for having needs.
3. Grounding in the innocence and beauty of our needs. They are an expression of life within us.
4. Recognizing that our needs are a gift - they provide an opportunity for others to contribute to us and to life.

"...You, sent out beyond your recall, go to the limits of your longing. Embody me. Flare up like a flame and make big shadows I can move in. Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror. Just keep going. No feeling is final."

~ Rainer Maria Rilke

Distinction between:

1. Wanting that is contracted and motivated by scarcity and distrust (demand energy)
2. Wanting that is an expression of our connection to life, and the longings that live in our heart (expansive).

Growing our connection to our longings brings us more alive regardless of the outcome.

Attachment is the root of suffering:

1. Creates demand energy which then reduces chances that other people will be moved to contribute to us.
2. Creates stress and inner tension which compromises our well-being.
3. We can't envision other ways to meet our needs - having less options, less freedom.
4. Attempts to control the outcome which leads to violence and distrust.

Attachment goes against the flow of life.

The How To:

1. Holding needs tightly and strategies lightly.
2. Being clear about the distinction between giving up and letting go.
3. Go to the limits of our longing - ever walking towards our needs by making requests, for example.
4. Accepting the possibility that our needs will not be met as part of human existential vulnerability.
5. Uncoupling our mattering from getting what we want.
6. Practice mourning.

Honoring Capacity:

When I'm not able to let go of the attachment:

1. Self compassion for my human limitation and for the intensity of my longing.
2. Explicitly owning my attachment.
3. Mourning the impacts on self and others.

Practice:

Think of a situation in which you don't have a lot of confidence that you will get your needs met, and you are having a hard time hearing a "no" to your request. Write down the situation and request, then explore your response to the "no" by responding to the following questions.

1. The situation: My feelings, needs and request:
2. "Go to the limit of my longing" - connect fully with what I want and dwell in the beauty of it.
3. How am I feeling about hearing "no" and what is my need in relation to the "no"?
4. What is my understanding of the other person's feelings and needs ? What needs they might be saying "yes" to that are leading them to say "no" to my request ?
5. Can I imagine other strategies for meeting my needs other than this person agreeing to my request?
6. What needs of mine might be met if I shift and completely let go of my request? (This is not a recommendation of what you might want to do, but rather only a suggestion for reflection that might increase self-understanding).
7. If I imagine that the person would not shift, how do I feel and what needs of mine come to life?
8. If I imagine that the person would do as I want out of fear, shame, guilt, obligation or 'buying' love - how do I feel and what needs are coming up?
9. If I imagine not getting my original needs met in this situation, how do I feel and what are my needs?
10. What is alive in me right now (my feelings and needs)? Have I gained any insights from reflecting on these questions?
11. What am I moved to say or do next ?

