

NON-JUDGEMENTAL COMMUNICATION



The aim is to practice open and non-judgmental communication by cultivating presence, observation, and curiosity – creating a safe space where participants feel seen, heard, and free to express themselves without fear of being judged.

NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION

Drawing on the principles of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) by Marshall Rosenberg, one key element which may help to practice this communication is learning to observe without interpretation. Instead of labelling or judging what someone says or does, we focus on describing what we see or hear as facts, not as conclusions. For example, rather than saying “you never pay attention to what I’m saying,” we might say, “I noticed you were looking at your phone several times”.

This shift invites openness and reduces defensiveness. Using language that is gentle, descriptive, and grounded in observation rather



EXPLORE

Take a quiet moment to recall a time when you felt truly seen – received just as you are, without judgment or expectations.

What was happening around you?

What did the other person do or say that made you feel accepted and safe?

Can you name the qualities or competencies that the other person showed, which made you feel fully accepted and seen? Which of them would you like to bring into your own forest guiding practice?

than assumptions helps participants feel seen and accepted just as they are. In the natural setting, this kind of communication reflects the non-judgmental presence of the forest itself: witnessing everything as it is, without needing to change or fix it.

At the same time it is difficult to expect non-judgmental communication from participants when they themselves may have not experienced or learned it before. Therefore, it is important not to judge them based on the fact that they might express judgmental attitudes themselves.

TIPS

- **Observe** the forest and group without adding judgment – focus on what you see and hear.
- **Avoid generalizations** when sharing observations or feedback.
- **Notice** when you feel judgmental during the walk and what triggers it.
- **Pause** before speaking to choose open, neutral language.
- **Listen** deeply to participants, seeking to understand without evaluating.
- **Use “I”** statements to share your experience without blaming
- **Reflect** on your own values and be mindful not to judge others for different choices, like diet, clothing, or behavior in nature, to keep the group atmosphere respectful and open
- Listen not just with your ears, but with your whole being. **Be curious**, open, and aware of how their presence resonates in you.

REFLECT

- What would happen if labels and judgments disappeared?
- What space would open within you if you let go of the need to define, compare, or categorize?
- And what would become possible in a group when everyone is received as they are – beyond roles, appearances, or their migration stories?