

## Living from the Heart Workshop 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012

*“They say there is a window from one heart to another, how can there be a window where no walls remain?” Rumi*

The short Rumi poem about sums up for me what it means to live from the heart, and means to me to allow barriers to melt away so an authentic and real communication can occur from ourselves to the other people in our lives.

### **What does Living from the Heart mean to you?**

We started with a meditation and an inquiry, and sharing what brought us to the workshop.

### **Non-Violent Communication**

*“Out beyond ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing there is a field, I’ll meet you there” Rumi*

Another Rumi poem which I love, and is a good basis for moving onto exploring NVC, which is a lot about moving away from a blaming and judging way of communicating, into a more compassionate and life enriching way of communicating, both with oneself and others.

NVC stands for Non-Violent Communication, and is also known as Compassionate Communication. It is a system of communication that helps us to structure the way we think, feel and deal with conflict in our lives. As such, it can be very therapeutic in its own right, never mind whether the conflict is communicated with the person or people involved. I personally have found an understanding of NVC invaluable in dealing with conflict when it arises with others in my life.

It has four basic components:

**Observation-** The concrete observations we observe.

**Feelings-** The feelings that this brings up in us.

**Needs-** The unmet needs or values that are beneath the feelings.

**Requests-** What we request of the other person or ourselves in order to enrich our lives.

As a simple example with dealing with communicating conflict in a shared house:

*“The washing up was left until the next day after dinner 3 nights this week. I feel irritated when I noticed that. I have a need to order and I value living in a spacious and tidy house. Can we discuss this further to help us both feel happier in our shared space?”*

It all sounds simple from what mentioned above, but actually if you delve a little deeper it is not so easy to simply observe without evaluating, also what you may think of as a feeling often contains a judgement, what you think of as ‘needs’ may not truly be a universal ‘need’ and the request is simply that, not a demand. I highly recommend further courses and reading on NVC, for more information on NVC please see Marshall Rosenberg’s book, A Language of Life.

## **NVC combined with EFT**

We went onto combining NVC with EFT - we did one round working with these sentences

“Even though I observe..... I accept myself”

“Even though this brings up the feelings..... I accept myself”

Each time tapping round for the observation and feeling, and then as the emotion begins to clear beginning to notice what the unmet need/value is beneath the feeling and tapping for this also, and what the request may be of oneself or the other person.

Then we did the process with the 4 components written on separate pieces of paper, and put them across the floor, and stepped from one to the other identifying the 4 components and tapping along as we went. For more information of this kind of the approach to NVC (although doesn't include the tapping!) see <http://nvcdancefloors.com/>

I feel tapping and NVC go really well together, and having an understanding of NVC can help you to help someone else navigate conflict in their lives, and assist discovering solutions or at least more inner peace with those dealing with relationship conflict.

## **Cultivating loving kindness**

We also did some empathic listening in pairs, each having a few minutes to speak and simply be heard by the other person. Then there was a meditation of bringing love to oneself, loved ones, people experiencing conflict with and finally to all people everywhere.

The afternoon concluded with a 'Namaste' and hug to each person in the room, which in Hindu means 'The divine in me, honours the divine in you'; although I invited you to have whatever intention works for you to develop a heart-felt and authentic connection with each person in the room.

I'll finish with a few inspiring words from another Sufi poet - Hafiz:

*“Even after all this time, the sun never said to the earth, you owe me, look at what happens with a love like that, it lights up the whole world”*