

What is Compassionate Communication? by Selene Aitken

The purpose of Compassionate (Nonviolent) Communication is to create an honest, empathic connection with the intention of meeting everyone's needs.

We do this primarily by maintaining an attitude of respect and compassion and also by using a communication model that includes the following:

- **Self-engagement**, to be compassionately aware of what I feel and want.
- **Honestly Expressing** how I am and what I would like without using blame, criticism or demands.
- **Empathically Receiving** how another is and what he/she would like without hearing blame, criticism or demands.

Whether expressing or receiving, Compassionate Communication focuses attention on four pieces of information:

Observations- Objectively describing what is going on without using evaluation, moralistic judgment, interpretation or diagnosis.

Feelings- Saying how I feel, not think, about what I have observed without assigning blame.

Needs- The universal values that are the source of feelings and the motivation for what we say and do, distinguishing them from specific strategies we might engage to satisfy our needs.

Requests- Concrete, doable actions that can meet needs without making demands.