

# Nonviolent communication

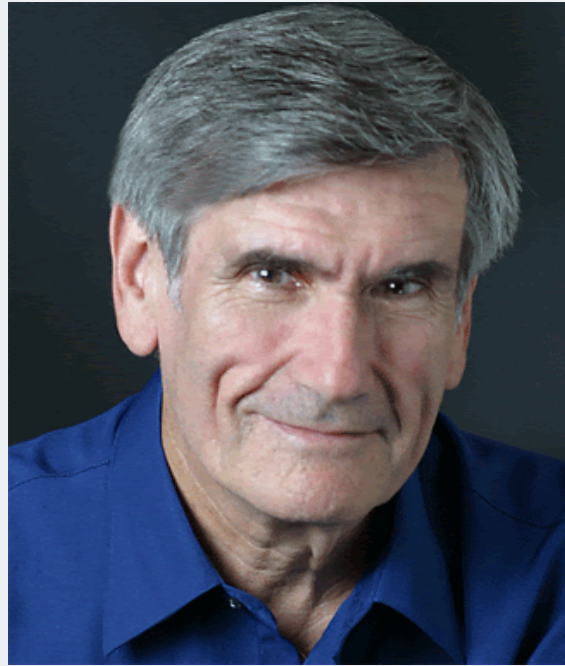
compassionate communication

**Activity book!**

strategies.  
connection  
nonviolent  
communication  
curiosity  
needs  
requests  
feelings



# Session 1



USA Psychologist (1934-2015)  
Creator of Nonviolent Communication

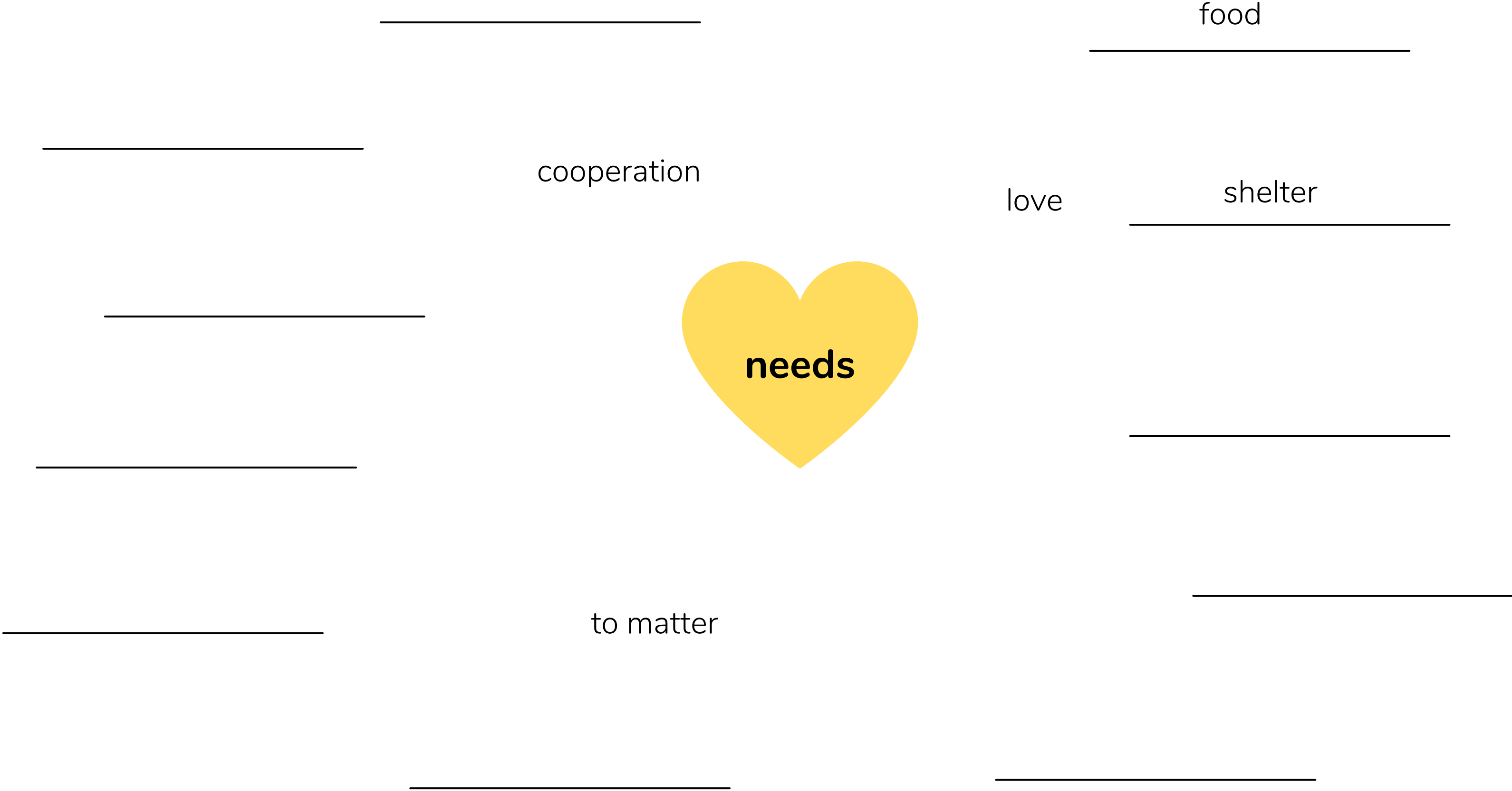
Author of the book: "Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life"  
More books and resources available at [cnvc.org](http://cnvc.org)

The purpose of nonviolent communication is to create a quality of connection among people that supports needs getting met through natural giving.

“  
Out beyond rightdoing and wrongdoing, there is a field.  
I'll meet you there.  
-Rumi”




Exercise 1



# List your strategy

“ ..... ”  
 strategy

Example:



strategy: “ chocolate ”

needs: pleasure

Can't think of an example? Try "exercise", or "car".

# Needs

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

sad

Feelings

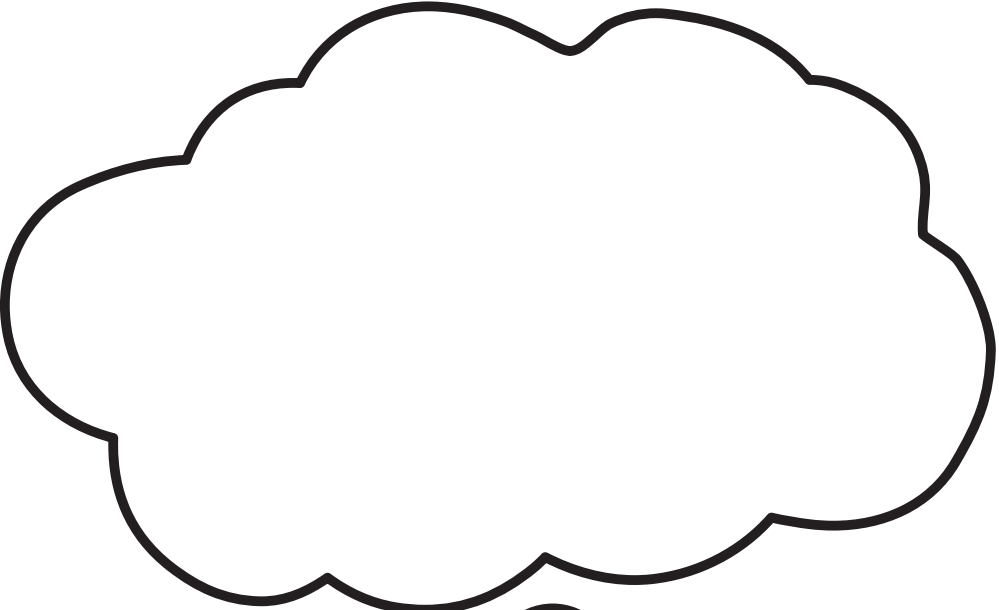
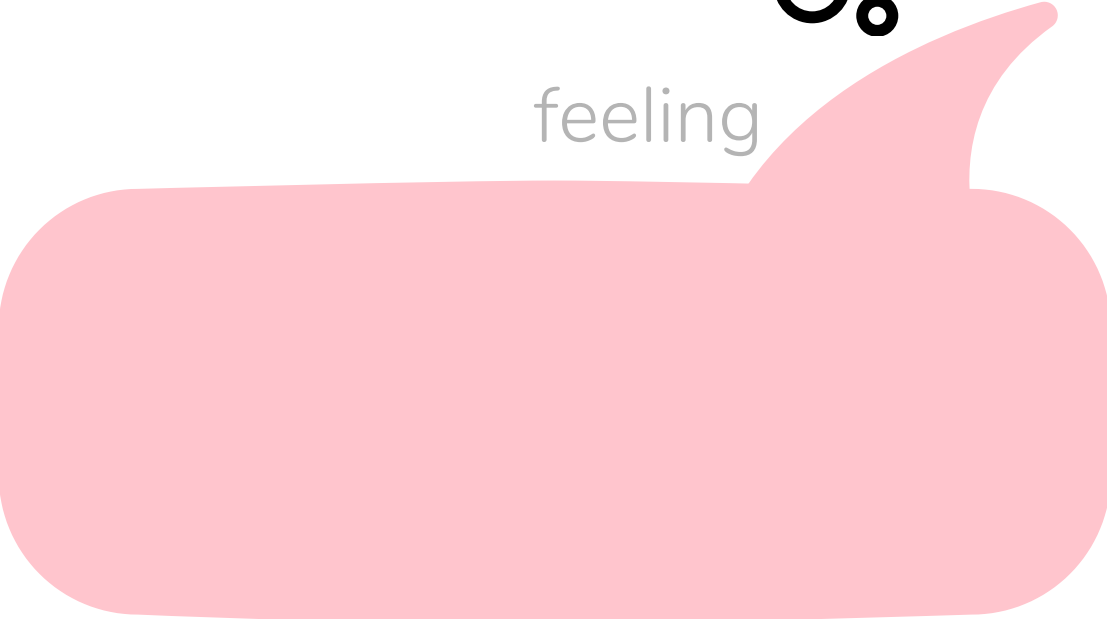
Exercise 4

If I am holding \_\_\_\_\_ what might I really be feeling?  
THOUGHT



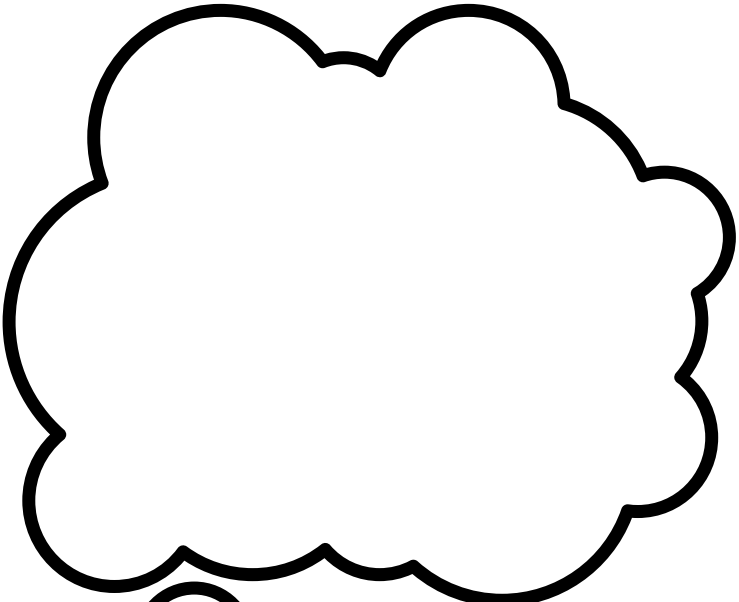
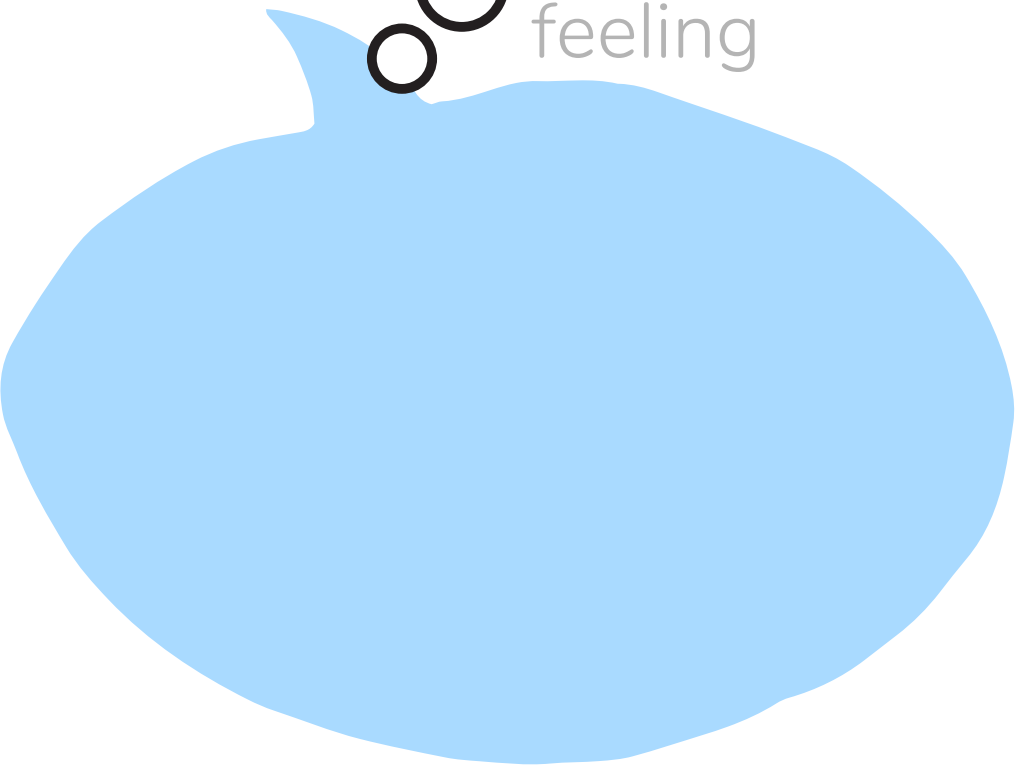
thought

feeling



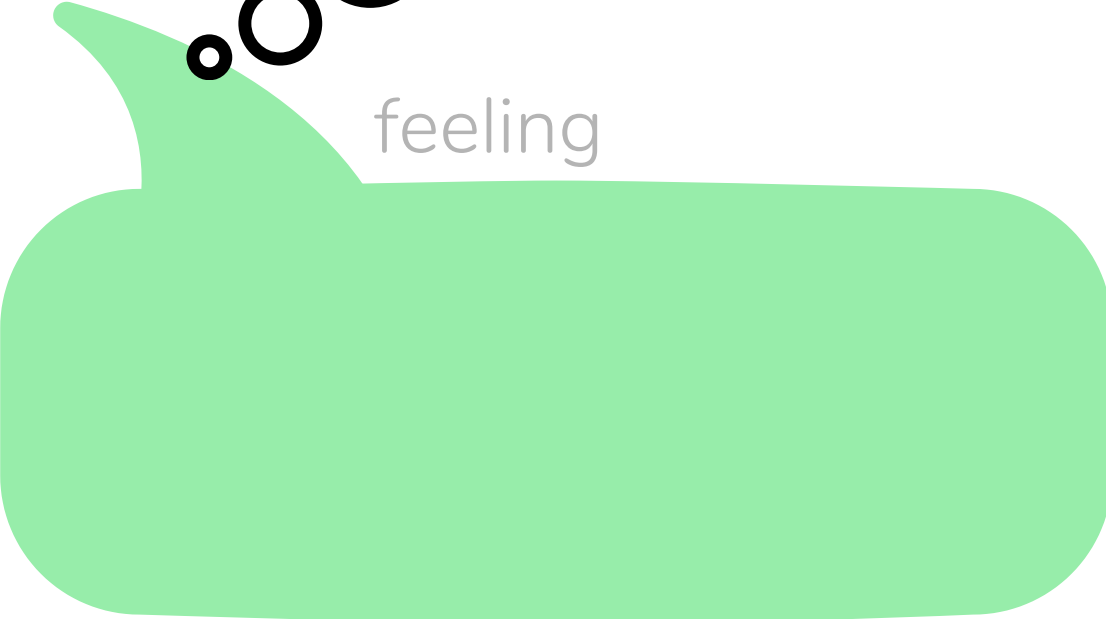
thought

feeling



thought

feeling



# feelings

## when needs are met...

adventurous	engaged	loving
affectionate	excited	moved
alive	fascinated	peaceful
calm	friendly	playful
confident	glad	relaxed
content	happy	satisfied
curious	hopeful	tender
delighted	interested	thrilled
energetic	joyful	warm

## when needs are not met...

agitated	embarrassed	nervous
alarmed	exasperated	overwhelmed
ambivalent	flustered	protective
angry	grief	sad
annoyed	heartbroken	scared
anxious	helpless	stressed
confused	hopeless	suspicious
despairing	impatient	tense
devastated	irritated	terrified
disconnected	lonely	torn
discouraged	longing	troubled

# needs

## Connection

acceptance  
affection  
clarity  
communication  
confirmation  
compassion  
intimacy  
understanding  
love

## Autonomy

choice, space  
spontaneity

## Peace

beauty  
ease  
harmony  
order  
wholeness

## Interconnection

belonging  
consideration  
community  
cooperation  
dignity  
mutuality  
support  
trust

## Meaning

contribution  
creativity  
hope  
inspiration  
purpose

## Honesty

authenticity  
integrity

## Competence

effectiveness  
efficiency  
growth  
learning  
power

## Celebration

joy  
mourning  
play

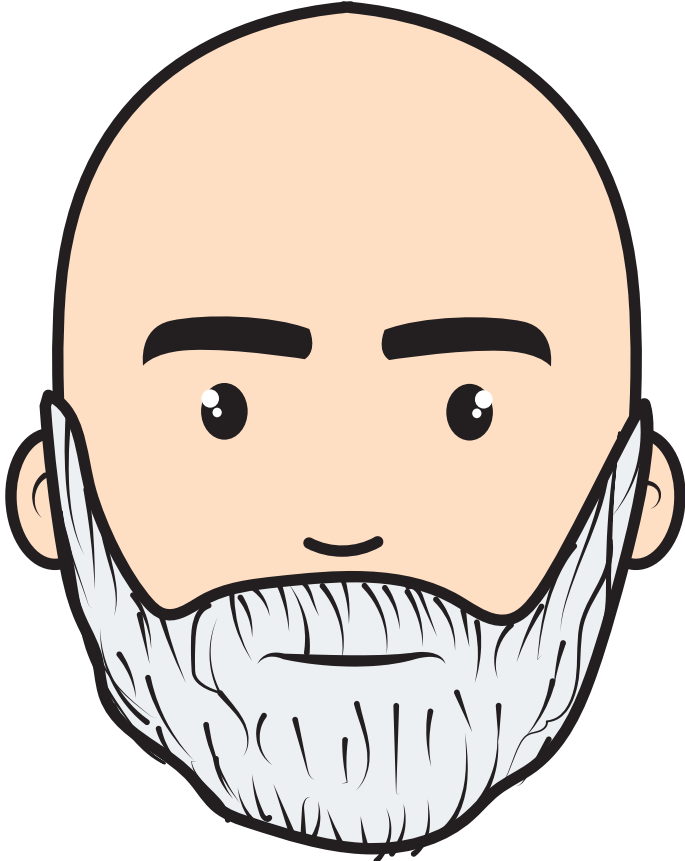
## Basic survival

shelter  
food & water  
rest  
safety  
security  
touch



Exercise 5

Empathy practice: guessing feelings and needs



Feelings

Needs

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

Exercise 6



Feelings

Needs

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

Exercise 7

insights I am  
taking with me



A large, light gray rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing insights taken from the exercise.

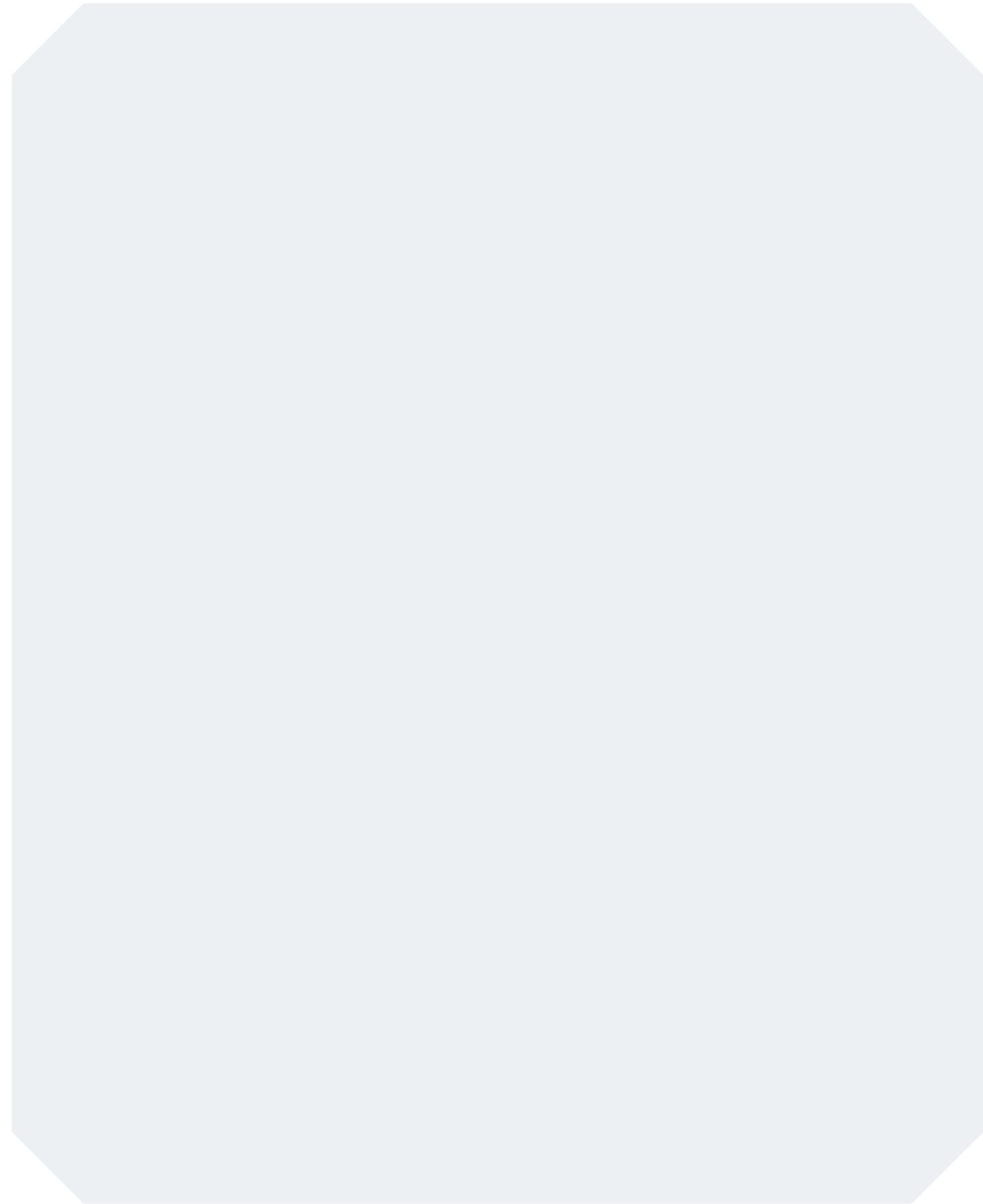
questions I  
still have



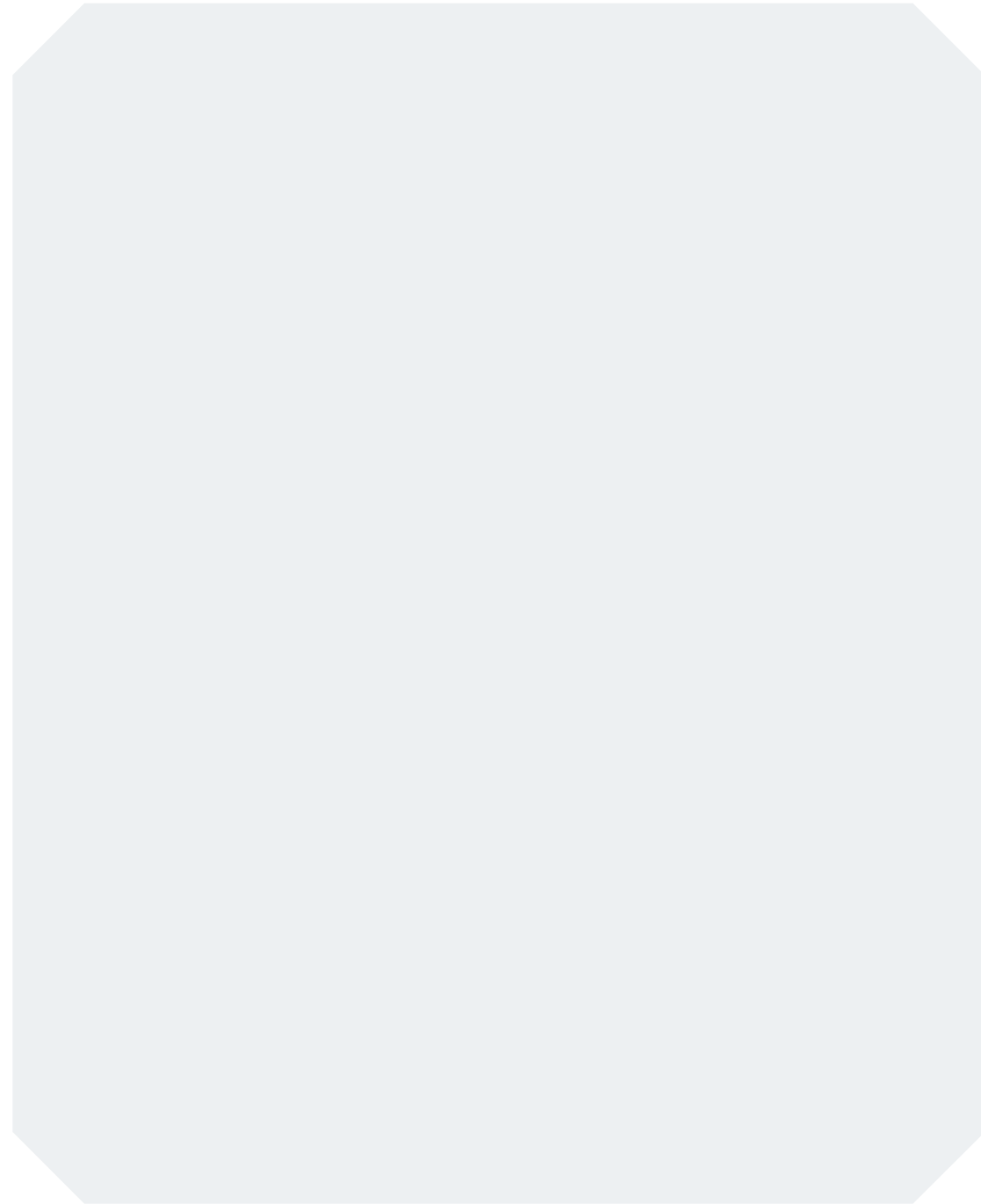
A large, light gray rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing questions still remaining after the exercise.

# journal

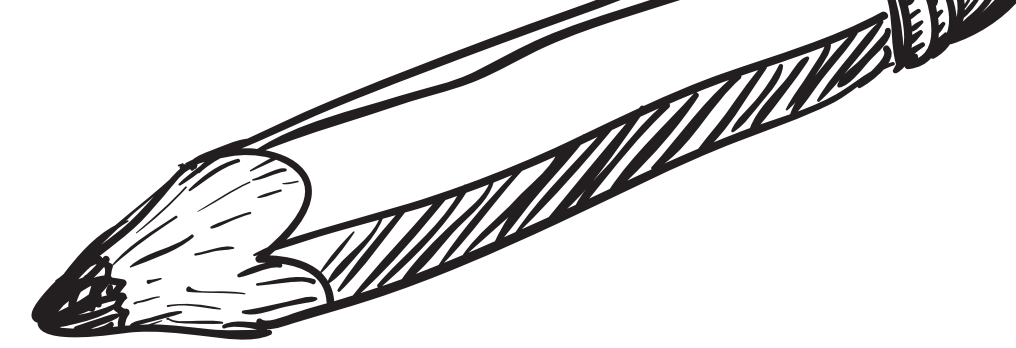
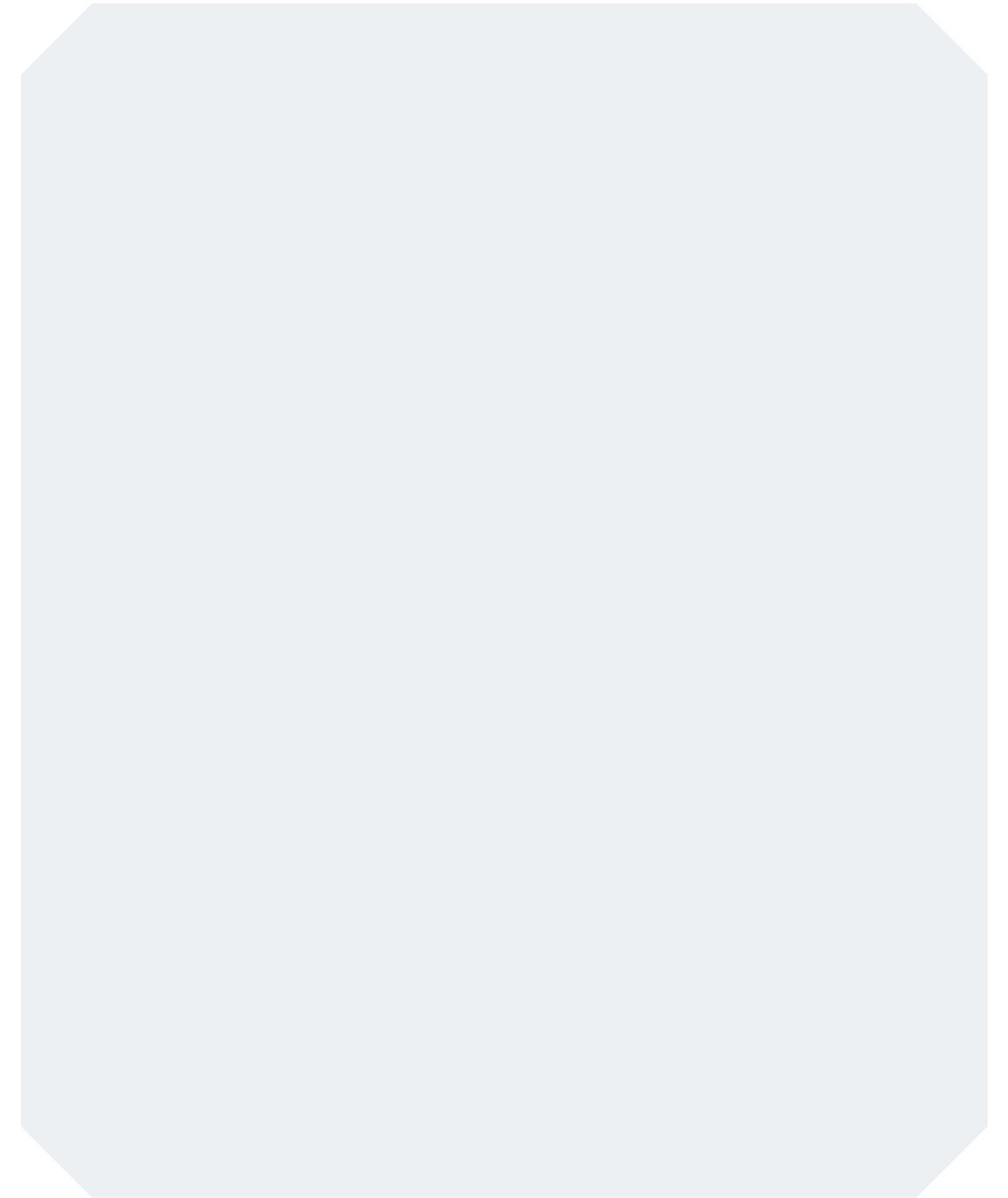
Something that happened today:



Feelings that came up for me



Needs I might be having

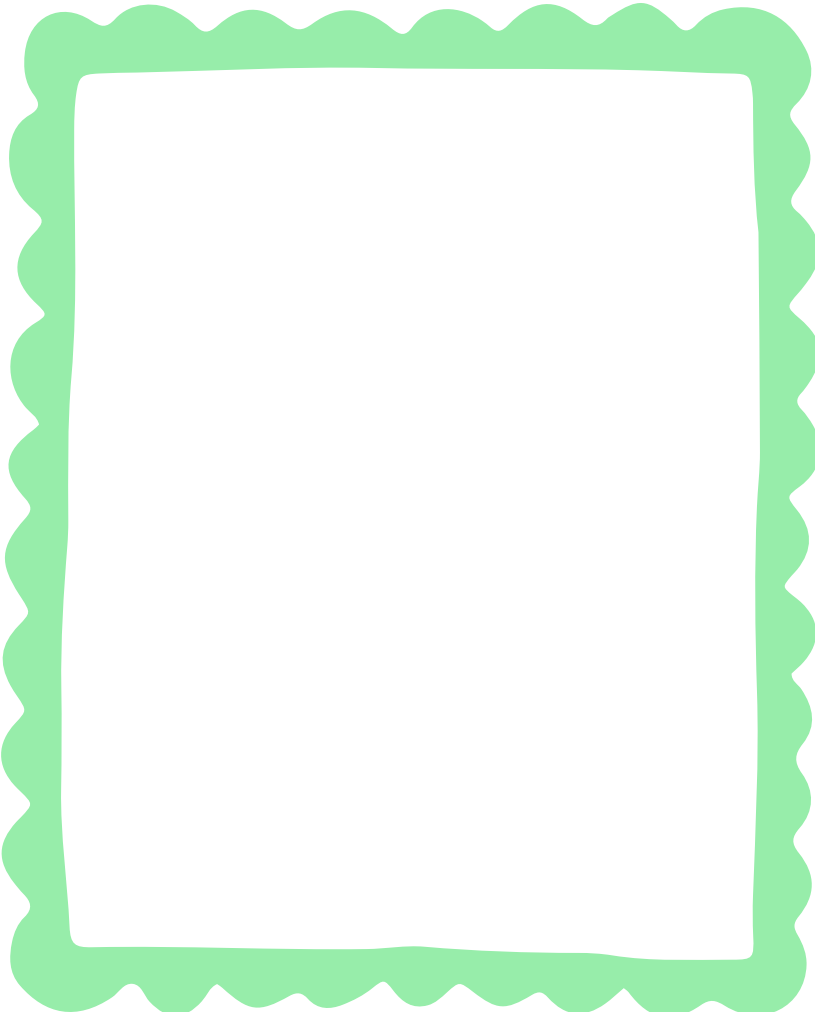


strategies.  
connection  
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# Session 2

Exercise 8



Feelings

Needs

<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

“ I have to ... / I should.../ I must...

●  
.....

●  
.....

●  
.....

”

Exercise 10

*(Pick one "have-to" statement)*

**I choose to**

.....

**because doing it contributes  
to my needs for....**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**I choose NOT to**

.....

**because NOT doing it contributes  
to my needs for....**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# Exercise 11

Needs

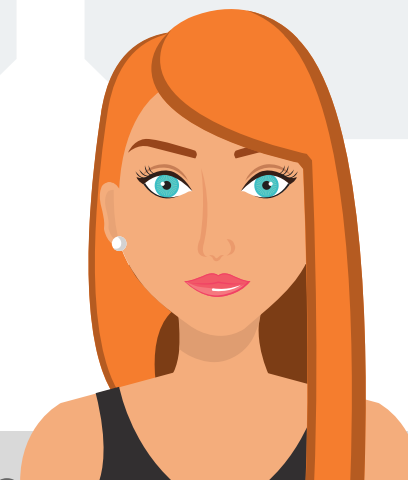
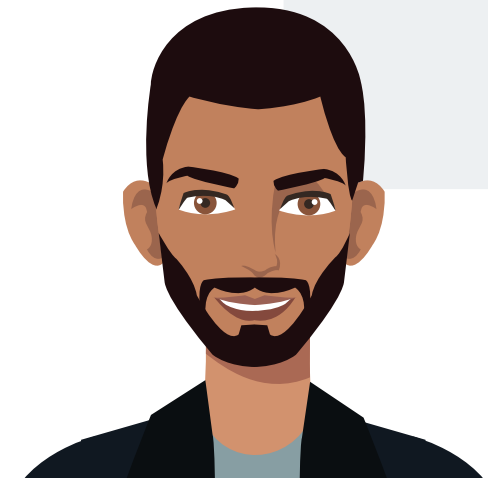
Needs

Action requests

Action requests

Connection requests

Connection requests



# Exercise 12

insights I am  
taking with me



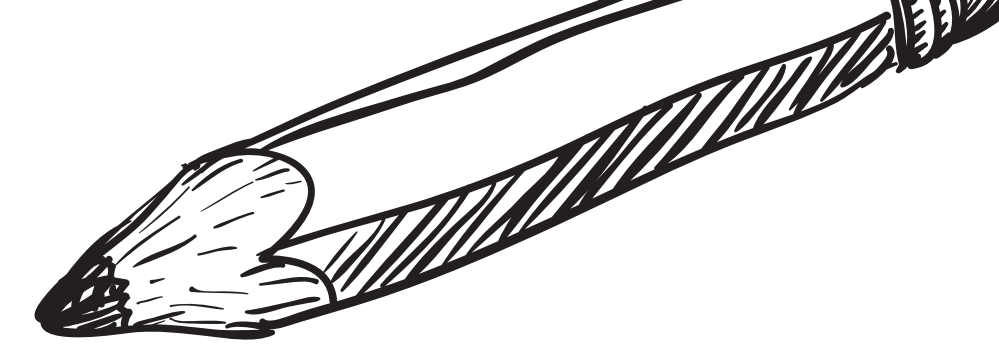
A large, light gray rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing insights.

questions I  
still have



A large, light gray rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for writing questions.

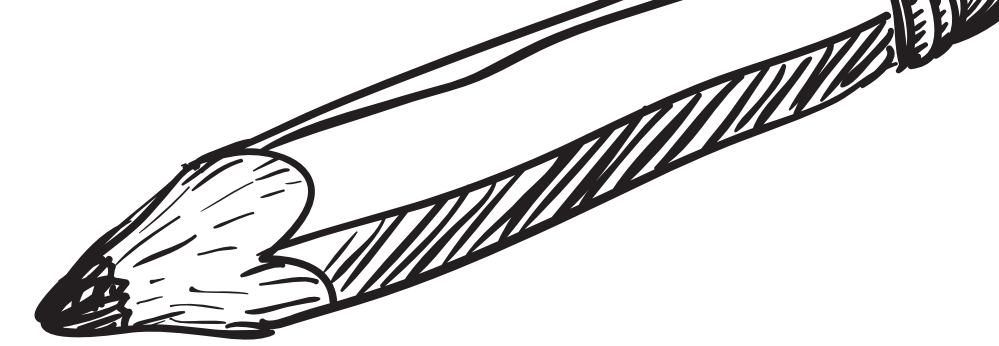
# homework



3 needs that are meaningful to me:

This need is important to me because...

# journal



Something that happened today:

Observations

Feelings that came up for me

Needs I might be having

Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

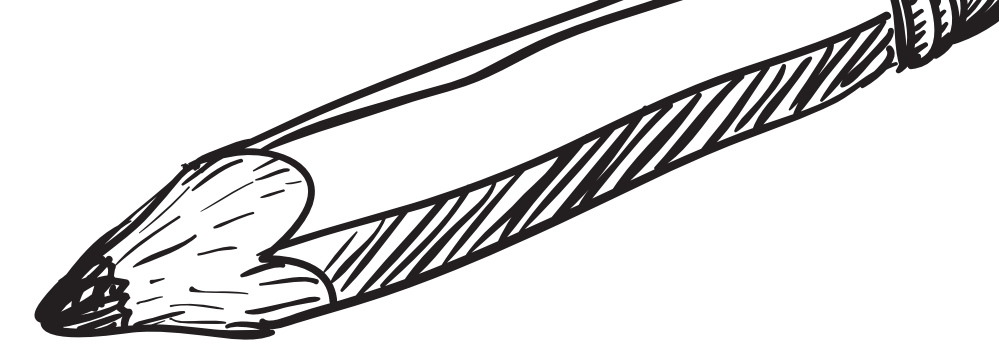
Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

Action/connection requests I could have made or could make (Of myself? The other? Someone else?)

Wide empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

# journal



Something that happened today:

Observations

Feelings that came up for me

Needs I might be having

Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

Empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

Action/connection requests I could have made or could make (Of myself? The other? Someone else?)

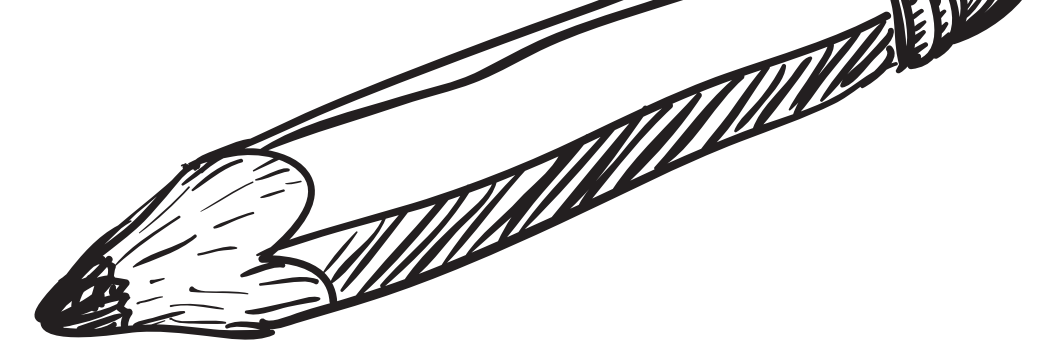
Wide empty rounded rectangular box for journaling.

strategies.  
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feelings



# Session 3

# *exercise*



Something that happened today

Observations

Feelings that came up for me

Needs I might be having

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing 'Something that happened today'.

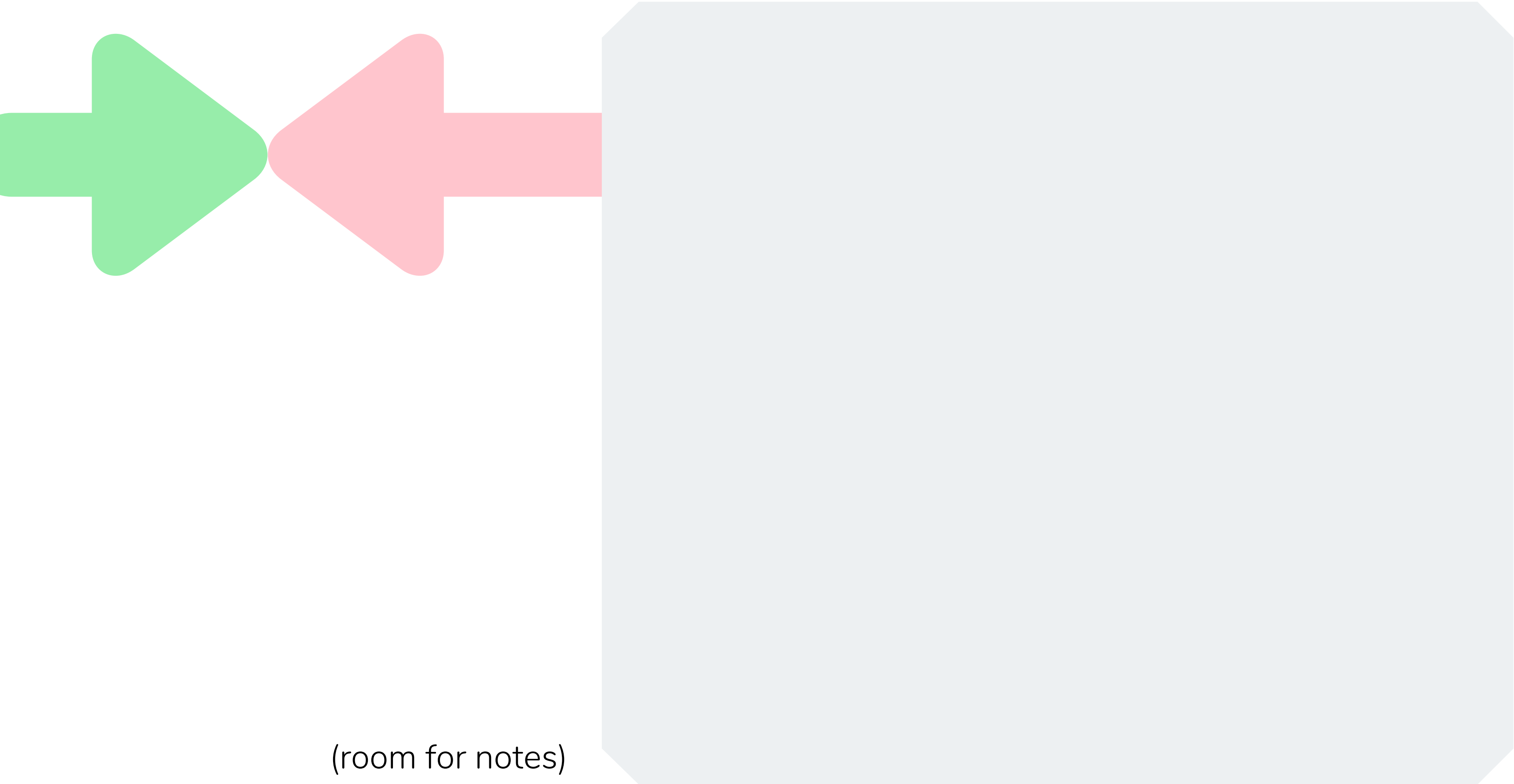
Empty rounded rectangular box for writing 'Observations'.

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing 'Feelings that came up for me'.

Empty rounded rectangular box for writing 'Needs I might be having'.

Action/connection requests I could have made or could make  
(Of myself? Someone else?)

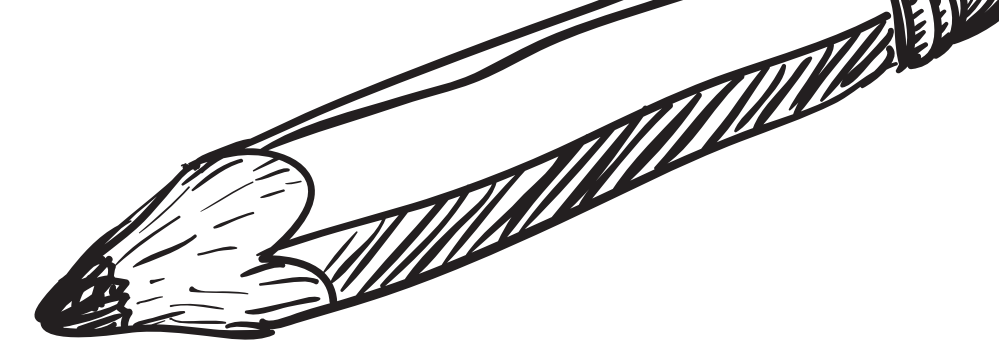
Wide empty rounded rectangular box for writing 'Action/connection requests I could have made or could make (Of myself? Someone else?)'.



(room for notes)



# gratitude



Observations

Needs that were  
contributed to



Feelings that  
I have as a result

Large empty rounded rectangular box for writing observations.

Large empty rounded rectangular box for writing needs that were contributed to.

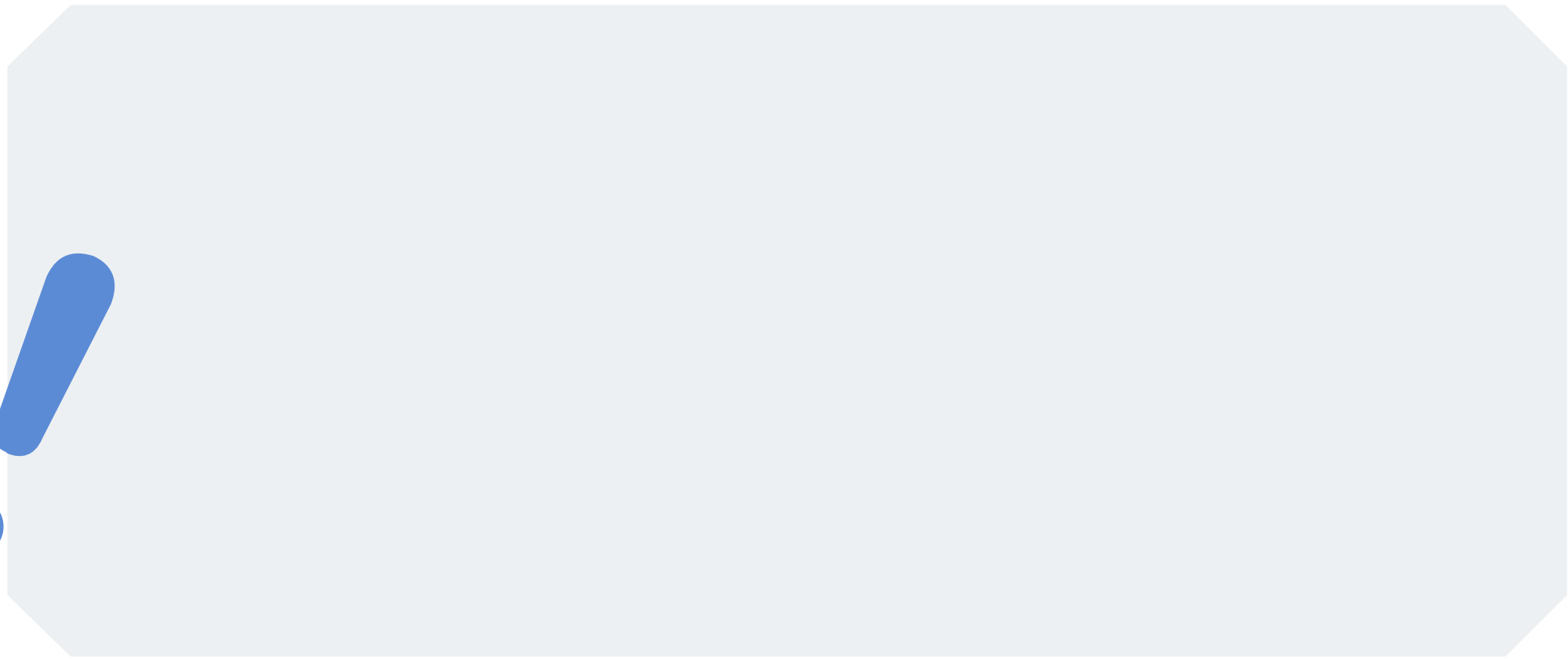
Large empty rounded rectangular box for writing feelings that result from the contribution.

Request

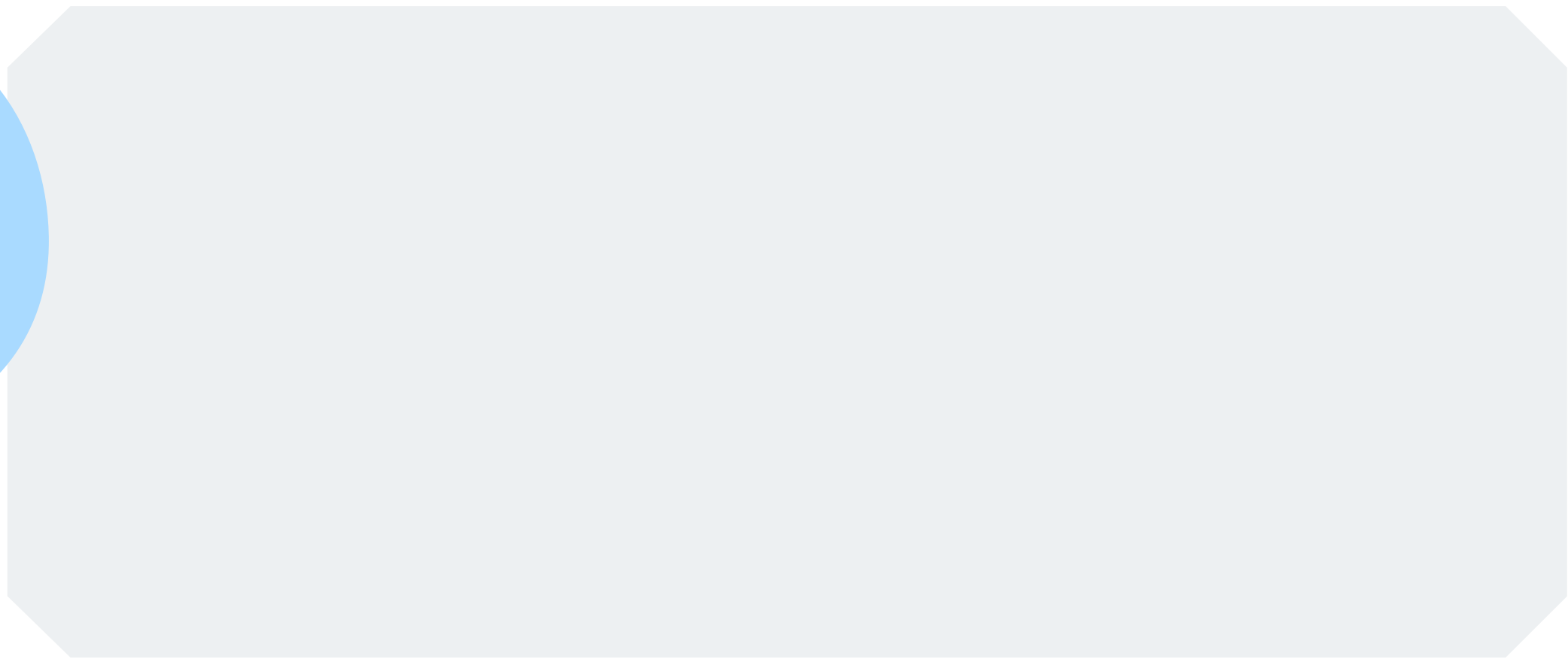
Large empty rounded rectangular box for writing a request.

Did I acknowledge my  
gratitude as much  
as I would like?

insights I am  
taking with me



questions I  
still have



# Appendix

Find more resources on the website under  
<http://www.sociocracyforall.org/nvc>



# Compassionate Communication/Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

One Purpose:

1. To create the quality of connection among people that supports getting needs met through natural giving.
2. Two Questions:
  - a. What is alive in me/you?
  - b. How can we contribute to making our lives more wonderful?

Three Choices/Modalities:

1. Self-empathy
2. Empathy for others
3. Honest expression

Four Parts of the Model of Nonviolent Communication

1. Observations
2. Feelings
3. Needs
4. Requests

# Key Assumptions of NVC

1. Universality of Human Needs: We all have the same needs. Where we differ from each other is in our strategies to meet needs. Conflicts occur at the level of strategies, not needs.
2. Feelings Result from Needs Being Met or Unmet: Our feelings, emotions and physical sensations are directly related to our needs. When our needs are met, we feel happy, satisfied, excited, etc. When our needs are not met, we feel sad, scared, angry, etc.
3. All Actions are Attempts to Meet Needs: Our actions are motivated by a desire to meet needs. Even when we resort to violence, we are still attempting to meet needs, however tragically. Because we all have needs for connection and contribution, we would prefer to meet needs in ways that don't harm others if we can recognize a path of action that will also meet our own needs.
4. Assessing Our Actions: We “judge” our actions not on the basis of moral judgments of good/bad and right/wrong. We evaluate our actions on the basis of how effective our actions are at meeting needs. That evaluation contributes to our ongoing learning and improvement.
5. Natural Giving: Natural giving is giving by choice, joyfully, and not giving through force, expectation, rules or compromise. Human beings inherently enjoy contributing to others, and will often choose to give what we are asked provided that we trust it is our choice to do so.
6. Sufficiency: Though in individual situations it sometimes appears that there isn't enough to meet everyone's needs, there is no inherent scarcity in the world for meeting everyone's basic needs. Dialogue and connection greatly contribute to our long-term ability to meet more people's needs more peacefully.
7. Nonviolent Communication is a spiritual practice – it involves both skill development and conscious intention.

# Nonviolent Communication Quick Reference Guide

<b>Observations</b>	Add a description of what is seen or heard without added interpretations. For example: instead of “She’s having a temper tantrum,” you could say “She is lying on the floor crying and kicking.” If referring to what someone said quote as much as possible instead of rephrasing.
<b>Feelings</b>	Our emotions rather than our story or thoughts about what others are doing. For example: instead of “I feel manipulated,” which includes an interpretation of another’s behavior, you could say “I feel uncomfortable.” Avoid the following phrasing: “I feel like...” and “I feel that...” - the next words will be thoughts, not feelings.
<b>Needs</b>	Feelings are caused by needs, which are universal and ongoing and not dependent on the actions of particular individuals. State your need rather than the other person’s actions as the cause. For example, “I feel annoyed because I need support” rather than “I feel annoyed because you didn’t do the dishes.”
<b>Requests</b>	Doable, immediate, and stated in positive action language (what you want instead of what you don’t want). For example, “Would you be willing to come back tonight at the time we’ve agreed?” rather than “Would you make sure not to be late again?” By definition, when we make requests we are open to hearing a “no,” taking it as an opportunity for further dialogue.
<b>Empathy</b>	In NVC, we empathize with others by guessing their feelings and needs. Instead of trying to “get it right,” we aim to understand. The observation and request are often dropped. When words are not wanted or are hard to offer, empathy can be offered silently.
<b>Self -Empathy</b>	In self-empathy, we listen inwardly to connect with our own feelings and needs. It is that self-connection which enables us to choose our next step – a request of ourselves or of others.
<b>Honest Expression</b>	In honest expression, we state what we have seen/heard, what feeling is triggered by our observation, what met or unmet need causes that feeling, and if we have any request to help get our needs met – “to make life more wonderful.”

# Making requests

## Request or demand?

- Is my intention to give the other person/s an opportunity to contribute to my life, and to do so willingly?
- To check this intention, think about how you might respond if you hear a “no” to your request. If you are willing to hear a “no”, and to continue the dialogue in NVC spirit, then it is a request. This does not mean there might not be some pain involved in hearing a “no”, but rather the willingness to communicate that and continue connecting until everyone’s needs are met.

## Characteristics of requests:

- Concrete and specific (vs. vague or general or asking for an attitude or intention)
- Positive action language (vs. negative - a “do” vs. a “don’t”)
- Doable (vs. not doable – as in more than the person could do)



## Connection requests:

- To Be Understood
  - Would you be willing to tell me what you heard me say? (Was my message received and understood in the way I intended it?)
  - Would you be willing to listen to my experience (my feelings and needs)?
- To Understand The Other
  - Would you be willing to tell me how you feel when you hear me say this? (To connect with the feelings and needs of the other/s in that moment)
  - Would you be willing to help me understand what happened here?
  - Would you be willing to tell me what would help you feel confident that I understand? d. Would you be willing to tell me what you need in order to agree to my request? e. Would you tell me what you wished would have happened differently?

## Action Requests

(also 'strategies' or 'solutions')

- Would you be willing to brainstorm with me solutions that might work for the both of us?
- Would you be willing to (state specific action)?

## Connection or Action Request: Which One?

- In any NVC dialogue, it is important to establish connection before we ask the other person for the solution that we would like. Connection in this sense means an understanding on the part of all parties of their own feelings and needs as well as the feelings and needs of the other/s involved. (Are all the needs on the table?)
- Until that connection is established, any solutions, agreements, or strategies are unlikely to be freely given and therefore generally will not hold. Therefore, in the first few cycles of an NVC dialogue, it is most important to use what we call connecting requests.
- Have you made this action request before and not gotten a heartfelt yes response? Do you have a deep enough quality of connection in this present moment to support the request you are making? Connection before Action!!!



## Practice sheet for honest self-expression

Pick an incident that triggered you in some way. What happened? Do you notice your judgments and interpretations mixed in with your observations of what happened? Start with stating what you observed without adding in judgments and continue with the fill-in-the-blank form there.

### Honest self-expression (OFNR)

- When I see/hear/notice... (one observation without judgment)
- I feel... (one or two feelings, rather than a projection or thought)
- Because I need/value/care about... (one or two universal needs, not my strategies)
- Would you be willing to... (Consider: is it a request or demand? Is request specific or vague? Stated in positive or negative? Is it really doable? Is it a connection request or an action request?)