

How to Start Restorative Communication in Trauma-Informed Schools – Module #1

The Giraffe & The Jackal



REFLECTION & ACTION

Reflect on these questions and answer them in your own journal.

How active have your giraffe and jackal been this past week?

When did your giraffe show up?

How did you feel when you used giraffe language or someone else used giraffe language with you?

When did your jackal show up this week?

How did you feel when you used jackal language or someone else used jackal language?

Create a personal action plan for next week.

How will you catch yourself using jackal language?

What is the reward if you use giraffe language and the penalty if you use jackal language?



ENVISIONING THE POSSIBLE

Think of a difficult situation that you are currently facing (with your kids, another relationship or even at work).

Now imagine that it's a year from now and your stress from that difficult situation is gone because you invited the giraffe into your life more.

- Describe how the giraffe-version of the story began.
- What happened next in your giraffe-focused story?
- And the end of the story? What's the best outcome ever?

Share your story with your study partner and ask your partner to listen intently and show excitement as the story progresses. As the speaker, be enthusiastic and embellish your success.

Take time with your study partner to celebrate your ability to project your giraffe into difficult situations.

And celebrate even more when you bring your giraffe to life this coming week!



VIDEO CORNER

Here are some videos to watch and discuss with your study partner. In each scenario, determine if giraffe or jackal language is being used? What do you think and why?

Link A: Parenting with NVC: But Mom - I want to play video games! [Watch now](#)

Link B: The Office - Conflict Resolution (Episode Highlight) [Watch now](#)

Link C: The Other Guys - Funny Scene - Office Argument [Watch now](#)

Link D: Frasier Miscommunication [Watch now](#)



TOOLS



The giraffe is a symbol of non-violent communication (NVC) because it is the animal with the biggest heart. Thus, when we are thinking and acting in terms of NVC, we are using our “Giraffe Ears” to hear and sense our own needs or other’s feelings and needs.

On the other hand, the jackal is a scavenger, attacking our weaknesses and allowing our unmet needs to cloud our ability to stay present. Therefore, when we are listening with “Jackal Ears,” we tend to hear blame, judgment or criticism rather than the feelings and needs behind words.



Responding to Your Inner Jackal

Try this playful technique the next time your jackal shows up.

Have a chat with your jackal over a cup of coffee to find out what it's been up to, how it sees the current situation.

What does it say? Actively listen to all its judging, blaming and shaming.

Invite your inner giraffe to the table. Introduce the giraffe to the jackal.

Explain that the giraffe is present to help you translate what the jackal is saying.

Ask the giraffe to explain what is happening using the 4 part framework.

Thank the jackal for sharing its thoughts with you and then ask it to leave.

Hang out with the giraffe.



Listens - Attuned - Connected - Available

Genuine- Empathic - Support- Feel - Present - Engaged - Curious

Open - Ego-less - Peaceful - Acknowledging - Understanding - Earnest

Critical - Judging - Complain - Competitive - Sarcastic - Mean - Snarky

Closed-off - Competitive - Bossy - One-upper

Directive - Controlling - Egocentric - Biting



Giraffe Examples	Jackal Examples
Adam, when I see shoes under the coffee table, I feel irritated because I am needing more order in the living room. Would you be willing to put your shoes at the doorstep?	Move your shoes, NOW! I'm so tired of this. Are you trying to get me to scream at you? Don't you care about how our house looks? I can't have people over because you're such a slob.
Is it that you are frustrated, and you wish this was easier?	Stop crying!
I'm hungry, and we know I get hangry. I'm starting to feel a bit worried because dinner's not ready yet. I want to make sure that I don't get hangry. How can I help with dinner?	Why isn't dinner ready yet? You promised it would be on the table by 7!
I see that you're working at your computer. I've been feeling grateful that you've found a project that you really enjoy and yet, sometimes I still would like your attention. Would you be willing to talk about how that could happen?	Why do you always have your head in your computer nowadays? Don't I matter to you?
I notice you're running. Running feels good, doesn't it? We need to stay safe inside, so let's only walk when we're in the house.	For Heaven's sake, I've told you 50 times today! Why don't you listen to me? What is the matter with you? STOP RUNNING IN THE HOUSE!
I see you're going to the gym again. That makes me feel ashamed that I haven't stuck with my fitness plan. I want to feel good about myself. Would you mind giving me some support to help me get going?	Well, look at you, off to the gym again. Must be nice to have so much free time to take care of yourself.

The 4 Part Framework

What does healthy communication sound like?

When there's a potentially difficult situation, instead of reacting, take a deep breath, then...

1. **Observe** the situation without evaluating or judging. A pure observation is without comparison to the past.
2. Identify a **feeling**. Feelings are always related to your body, and never involve others.
3. Identify your **need** or desire. A basic need is always about oneself, not about another, and is always a simple human quality.
4. Formulating a **request**. Phrase a specific request positively, speaking kindly, but firmly and clearly, without unnecessary emotion such as sarcasm.

Try to obtain feedback on everything you have done so far. "Am I on the right track with this conversation?" or "Time out. How are we doing resolving this issue?"

4 Part Speaking Framework

1	Observation	I see....
2	Feeling	I feel...
3	Need	I need...
4	Request	I would like...

"Margaret, when I (1) see that the classroom still has items not in the proper places. I (2) feel disappointed because I need (3) to know that I can trust you to do what you say you'll do as my partner teacher. (4) Would you be willing to put the last of the social studies materials away before going home? (5) So I see that you're frustrated. Do you need to sit and talk? I have 10 minutes before I need to leave. Let's chat.

4 Part Listening Framework

1	Observation	I see that you....
2	Feeling	Are you feeling...?
3	Need	Do you have a need
4	Request	Would you like me to...?

"Leo, when I (1) hear you raising your voice I (2) am guessing that you feel aggravated about what happened with Kathy earlier today. Is that right? (3) It sounds like you want to feel acknowledged for all of the hard work you've already done for Literacy Night, yes? (4) Would it be helpful to role play with you what a conversation with Kathy might sound like, if you were to speak with her about it?