

At present, this document is **closed** for comments until the course is in flow, likely by early March. This line at the top is changed whenever the document changes access from view to comment and back.

## Vision

Across the world individuals are bootstrapping themselves and each other from the grip of [patriarchal conditioning](#), unleashing their innate human capacity for [leadership](#), stepping into their power to care for the whole in interdependent relationships, and passing on the possibility of [re-mothering](#) our world through narratives and agreements that are oriented to needs and natural limits.

## Values

**Radical tenderness** as stretching and inviting others' stretching only within capacity limits

**Liberation** as leaning on the soft qualities to support us in undoing patriarchal conditioning

**Global vision** as looking truth straight in the eye about where humanity is and what is possible

**Collaboration** as finding pathways of togetherness and unconditional generosity even when patterns of scarcity, separation, and powerlessness are active

## Purpose

To accelerate individual and collective [liberation](#) in times of global crises through live coaching and engaging actively in co-learning nonviolent leadership

## Theory of Change

We get bursts of energy from celebrating breakthroughs, mourning and learning from our own and each other's mistakes, discovering new insights about liberation, tying whatever happens to our shared purpose, and allowing ourselves to want what we want to ignite and cultivate our field of togetherness in support of our collective commitment to face the situation in the world together.

## Capacity Assessment

### Strengths

- Miki harnesses the energy and quality of each person.
- Miki functions in transparency and vulnerability, including about her personal learning, limitations, and other things, which serves as a modeling of how to develop and increase capacity.
- Several years of history have created a culture that supports people who come in, which includes intimacy and trust, collaboration, and a sense of co-traveling on a journey and being together with the unknown.
- The culture includes attention to cultural and power differences, for example inviting people who usually don't speak or who are from groups that are underrepresented to speak first.

- There are people who've been in the course longer and bring more resources and capacity to hold.
- There is no curriculum and everyone's live content and contribution is woven together into the tapestry of what happens.
- Miki models listening for the noncontroversial essence whatever and however people bring forward.
- Miki relies on her intuition and unpacks it sufficiently to support others in trusting and developing theirs.
- Miki has the ability to synthesize across multiple disciplines.
- The course offers opportunities for people to stretch knowing that while there cannot be any guarantee of "safe space", there is the commitment to presence and accompaniment wherever people go.

## Limitations

- Sensitivity to busy-ness on the screen / chat
- Miki routinely underestimates how much people are limited by patriarchal conditioning
- Miki finds it challenging to care for the wide range of different processing speeds and capacities that people have (and may overestimate people's capacity)
- Miki is not usually open to receiving empathy, as it's not in general what supports her. This means that those who come from NVC contexts may find it off-putting at times.
- The content includes density, complexity, and depth of analysis that makes it challenging for some people to follow and stay connected.

## Openings

- Participants are from multiple countries, which creates cultural diversity as well as providing opportunities to investigate how this approach to leadership works in multiple contexts.
- The course operates on a gift economy.
- Zoom technology allows people to participate without having to go anywhere.

## Obstacles

- Zoom technology means limited experience of connection and depth.
- The course is only offered in English which limits participation.
- Participants engagement inhibited by patriarchal conditioning.
- Some people find the size of the group (anywhere from 65 to over 100 people attend on a weekly basis) challenging for them to come forward for coaching or to have a sense of belonging.
- The commitment to invite those who speak less often to speak more means that people want to speak and don't.
- Miki's vagabonding means sometimes there are blips in the schedule or in internet connection.
- Participants have different processing speeds and capacities and with the course being very information-dense, it's hard to care for the diversity of experiences.
- Participants who are used to NVC spaces may come in with the expectation that the facilitator responds to them with empathy by default, which Miki consciously chooses not to do, reserving empathy only for when she believes it is genuinely needed.

## Principles

1. Bringing forth radical tenderness when we are stuck in a painful place allows movement towards liberation without recreating patriarchal patterns.

## Mission

1. Maintaining an ongoing learning lab based on Miki's and others' research and [experiments with truth](#)

## Intentions, and Practices

- a. Engaging collectively with Miki at the edge of her thinking and discoveries
  - b. Supporting individuals who are taking what we're talking about and applying it in their contexts to learn from the results
  - c. Actively expanding and delving into the range of questions that can be included within the research
2. Supporting everyone in finding their strategic discomfort on their path of liberation
  3. Creating conditions for people to learn from and with each other
    - a. Weekly small groups to engage with integration of the material and new questions
    - b. Temporary and long term emergent communities that are formed from within the large group
  4. Modeling collaborative leadership and facilitation
  5. Passing on sufficient embodied conceptual content to support people's leadership capacity, such as:
    - a. The maternal gift economy and the mothering principle, including caring for the whole and resource flow based on matching resources to needs
    - b. Understanding how we came to where we are collectively and how patriarchal systems and conditioning shape who we are individually and collectively, and how to shift again from scarcity, separation, and powerlessness to flow, togetherness, and choice leaning on the [Power of the Soft Qualities to Transform Patriarchy](#)
    - c. Content that is in the [Learning packets](#) and [Miki's articles](#) and books
    - d. Books and materials that Miki references during sessions or within other materials

## Action Agreements

### Decision Making

1. Miki makes all decisions about how the course is run with as much input as is within her capacity to integrate from others in care for the whole.
  - a. Whether there are going to be guest speakers, when, and who

2. Individual participants decide whether and how much they participate in the course.
3. Miki decides with individuals how to support them when they participate.

## Flow

### Resource Flow

#### 1. Weekly sessions

- a. Each session lasts two hours, generally structured as follows:
  - i. 2-5 min of getting started
  - ii. Miki usually introduces a topic for the rest of the first 90 minutes. Sometimes there is no topic and the entire session is focused on what participants bring
    1. When participants want to introduce a topic, they are asked to use a worksheet designed to support discernment in what and how to bring forth. (Note: the worksheet is available along with all other resources once people register)
    2. Participation is only within willingness. Any time someone senses that someone else is no longer within willingness, they are invited to say so and check.
  - iii. Everyone is welcome to participate. They let Miki know they want to participate by raising their hand electronically. Miki decides on the order in which to invite them to speak.
  - iv. As close to 90 min in as possible, even if there are still people who want to participate, the flow shifts to breakout groups of about 3 people. They are created for up to 20 min to digest their learning and experience. At times, specific instructions are offered for those who want them.
    1. There are options for people to choose to connect in small groups based on language or specific interests.
    2. While there is no active offering in the main room, anyone who prefers not to be in a small group for whatever reason stays in the main room and sometimes spontaneous conversations occur.
  - v. The last few minutes of the session are dedicated to people sharing from what happened in their groups.
  - vi. At the very end, a few people share what they have taken with them from the course.
- b. At the end of each session there is an informal “after-party” self-organized by participants.
- c. The option exists for any topic that arises and isn’t attended to within the session to be tracked. (see below in Information flow)
- d. Miki is committed to leading at least 36 sessions in the course of the year, with the rest being led by guest speakers.
- e. Anyone who participates agrees implicitly to coaching by Miki. Most of the time, Miki focuses on coaching, learning, purpose, and specific practices in support of integration and liberation. She intuitively senses when spaciousness, tenderness, or empathy are needed before such movement can happen, and then shifts to that mode. She is always open to requests and participants are requested to name their preference for empathy (as much as is within their capacity) when they would like her to reflect back what they said/guess feelings and needs/hold them with care in some other specific way.
- f. Miki is generally transparent about her facilitation choices and ready to respond to questions about them for everyone’s learning.
- g. The pacing of the sessions is often quite rapid and yet there are many pauses, especially during working with specific individuals, so that everyone, including Miki, can integrate what is happening before choosing what to do next.

## 2. Materials

- a. All materials exist within the classroom set up for those who register for the course. They include:
  - i. Access to all available Learning Packets
  - ii. Reflection sheets
  - iii. Worksheet for introducing a topic
  - iv. Anything else that is shared

## 3. Logistics

- a. The NVC Academy attends to outreach, registration, technical support, and materials.
- b. Miki finds and makes contact with guest speakers, and Lore (or someone else from the NVC Academy) makes arrangements with them.

## 4. Support for participants

- a. Care system
  - i. At the beginning of each session, someone from the group that holds the care system makes an announcement reminding people how to access empathy support and how to offer empathy support as needed.
  - ii. Empathy support happens in a breakout room when requested.
- b. VM support
  - i. Each person receives a template of VM structure with basic ingredients to start from when they register
  - ii. A number of people exist to offer VM support to individuals in small groups
- c. Impact digestion support
  - i. A number of people have stepped forward who are available to support people in metabolizing and learning from impacts on them, as well as possibly converting them to feedback as part of the feedback system below.
- d. **VOID:** Someone or a small team to coordinate the various supports

## 5. Additional community groups

- a. Several groups exist within RTTC and are accepting new members.
- b. Anyone is always welcome to create a new group.

## 6. Support for Miki

- a. Several people implicitly and sometimes explicitly co-hold the space with Miki. The include, at present: Desiree Banzhaf, Sue Holper, Shana Deane, Anna Herzog, and others as that becomes clear and visible to Miki.
- b. **VOID:** people to hold this VM with Miki during the small group time within sessions. (Criteria: strong familiarity with VM, ongoing meaningful and easeful relationship with Miki outside of session time, previous attendance at RTTC)

## 7. Attending to global power differences

- a. Miki usually prioritizes hearing from people who are from global majority origins (and also from people who speak less often).

## Information Flow

1. Future topics and ideas are tracked in one of several ways:
  - a. The person who brought up the topic, Lore, or anyone else takes on the responsibility to bring it up again.
  - b. **VOID:** we use a collective tracking document that everyone can refer to.
2. Lore sends emails to participants with information about changes to schedule, new materials, or anything else of relevance, including requests from Miki to share information or ask for information from participants.

3. Participants who want to connect with Miki and don't have her email address can contact the NVC Academy Helpdesk and such emails, unless they are handled directly, get passed on to Miki.
4. Participants have the option of connecting with each other through the classroom.

## Feedback Flow

1. Feedback from Participants
  - a. About the way the course is facilitated:
    - i. During sessions, Miki takes in anything that has feedback potential within it, and integrates whatever she can from it into future actions on her part of agreements within the systems.
    - ii. **IN DEVELOPMENT:** Anyone who experiences impacts that cannot be attended to by the empathy support offered can access a pool of people who are available to support others with metabolizing, learning from, and converting impacts into usable feedback. (Note: this section of the feedback system is not yet operational, as this is the first year it's being offered.)
      1. When metabolizing has completed, individuals are invited to read Miki's Instruction Manual. If what they want to bring forward is already covered there, there are likely to be requests for them to attend to in order to support everyone's focus. If such requests are not within capacity for the individual in question, this is a time to engage in a discernment process about whether or not to stay in the course.
      2. If the feedback is new information, or, through discernment with support the conclusion is to engage with Miki to see if new strategies to attend to more needs are within capacity for her, the feedback is brought into the next session for all to learn from.
  - b. About the logistics:
    - i. Lore is available to hear from people after the session.
    - ii. Anyone can access the [NVC Academy Help Desk](#).
  - c. About this VM:
    - i. This document is frequently open for comments and that is announced at the top of it.
    - ii. Comments are integrated within Miki's capacity and the capacity of those who support her with holding this VM.
2. Feedback from Miki
  - a. Miki offers feedback integrated into her coaching, and usually asks if people are open to feedback. If not, Miki is open to being reminded that not everyone is open to receive feedback at all times.

## Conflict Engagement

1. Neither Miki nor Lore attend to conflict between participants and each other, except when attending to it might support learning for the whole and by agreement with Miki, in which case it will happen during weekly sessions.
2. Participants are invited to use the [experimental conflict engagement system](#) to attend to conflicts between themselves.
3. Any conflict that arises between any participant and Miki is attended to in the following sequence:
  - a. The participant seeks support from the care system
  - b. **IN DEVELOPMENT:** the participant seeks support with metabolizing impacts and then converting them to feedback as above.
  - c. Anyone who has lost sufficient trust to not be able to engage with any of the above support is given a refund for the course

## Glossary

- **Patriarchal conditioning** – So far, my favorite short definition of patriarchy isn't mine. It comes from Adigo Atabo's [website](#). Patriarchal socialization leads to internalization of the scarcity, separation, and powerlessness that are the building blocks of patriarchy.
- **Re-mothering** – Genevieve Vaughan, a deep researcher in the field of gift economy, speaks of the maternal roots of the gift economy, and about humans being a mothering species. Mothering means orienting to others' needs and to the whole, including self in the mix. Re-mothering our world means realigning humanity with our evolutionary makeup through uncoupling giving from receiving and moving towards active interdependence.
- **Leadership** – I generally view leadership as the willingness to take responsibility for and care for the whole in interdependent relationship with others, even when those others are not doing so themselves, and even when we know that our perspective is by necessity limited.
- **Liberation** – I use the definition of Erica Sherover-Marcuse: “the undoing of the effects and the elimination of the causes of social oppression.”
- **Experiments with truth** – This term comes from the title of Gandhi's autobiography. At present, I hold it that every experiment with truth is taking the deepest truth that is in me, bringing it to interact with the circumstances in which I am, and seeing what happens. Like all experiments, I see an inherent unknowability of what we do and what the outcome will be when we aim to apply visionary, liberation-based frames, principles, and practices to any context in which we engage with others. We enter the field with questions such as:
  - How far can we get when we rigorously apply the commitment to the soft qualities?
  - Overall, in this situation in this context, how far towards the vision can we go?
  - How far does my capacity stretch in very hostile territory before I exceed it?