

The importance of the link between NVR and NA.

It could be interesting to see what occupies NVA/NA course members, to know what their needs are. So, in this article I'm sharing some cases who struck me as a trainer. At once this article is an invitation... What are the experiences of the other trainers? Do they encounter the same findings or can't they find themselves back in these findings? Couldn't it be interesting to have a discussion on this matter?

Sure some findings are linked with a sector or a target group but maybe some are also cultural or territorial connected.

It should – so I set down again and again – be useful to find unity in the appellation. Now, there's a undoubted taboo on the word 'authority'. And by trying to avoid this term, we end in abstruseness. Sometimes we go for totally other titles or are stuck with Nonviolent Resistance (NVR), terms that call up on less resistance but by using that word makes us forget about the principle of New Authority.

Sometimes I'm astonished when people who are supposed to know the subject stagger when they have to link New Authority to Nonviolent Resistance.

I myself, I prefer to call a cat a cat. According to the definition of authority it's surely this what the model means. All other kinds of 'emotional and neutral', nice sounding names works confusion in the hand.

The NA-model wants to look differently at the relation between the non-equals. NA wants to reflect to the relation between people who listen and people to whom are listened to. Authority has a direct connection with power of influence.

Doesn't the positive way in which the NA-model gives meaning to the word 'authority' makes NA special? Isn't this the point we struggle with? Because a society without authority, without administrators who take care of law and order is an unattainable ideal.

Besides, I often start a training-session with a question. I ask the course members what the word 'authority' means to them. They can write their answers on large white pieces of paper. Then I encircle with green the positive words and with red the negative ones. And, no... I never had a disparity between the number of green and red circles.

Let us go for unambiguity and believe in this model without any compromises.

It is so that in Flanders this model is longest known in the social sector and a whole lot of course members with roots in this sector have at least heard of the NA-model.

That this model is known is positive but their experiences with the NA-model are not so positive. Mostly they used the model in their working environment for a while but then it was put away because they changed jobs or didn't see any use or opportunity to implement it in their new environment.

It's guessing for the right reasons but it's like a 'red wire' in each of the stories.

A whole lot of people don't have a clue how New Authority and Nonviolent Resistance are linked to each other. Most of them have only heard of Nonviolent Resistance (NVR) and are only using the announcement and the sit-in.

That *NVR* is a translation of the in Dutch literature used '*Geweldloos verzet*' (not abridged) is often unindistinct. There is nothing wrong in using an English term or an English abbreviation but it may not hinder the admission to the limited Dutch literature on the subject.

Almost all the coaches who work with this model had at least a part of their training in English but if we give training sessions in our own land it's important that we also use the Dutch terminology.

A lot of persons working in juvenile care started a long time ago with great courage with the implementation of the NVR-announcement and the sit-in but as the results failed to come they've put away these tools.

This disappointment isn't peculiar rather than logical because they did an announcement of a sit-in apart from the base of New Authority.

Administrators who are reading their announcement without having self-control or without even understanding the importance of it or without releasing the control over the juvenile are only reading with the intension of changing the behaviour of the youngster as soon of possible. These administrators will see no result.

If in an announcement names are given of people belonging to the network of administrators, then they really have to belong to the network. And this should be noticed after the announcement by noticing that these people keep each other informed, that they support each other and that they are working together as a well-oiled machine. Personally I'm convinced that an announcement misses its aim if there weren't proceeded by at least one support meeting.

If you let the participants choose - after an introduction - which subjects they want to elaborate, people with some experience in this model won't choose for the subjects announcement or sit in.

But meanwhile it has become clear that if you elaborate the concept of New Authority, they will give the announcement and the sit-in a new chance. They often understand the exact meaning of the announcement and sit-in better when they understand the importance of working on 'proper authority'.

The less popular NVR-tools as enlarging a network with supervision, the phone patrol, the following, the delay, the framed punishment, the compensations... are often the ones that are first used.

There isn't enough literature in which the link between New Authority and NVR/Non Violent Resistance is explained. The English terms aren't – understandable – used. And so the term New Authority is often wrongly avoided and so no-one knows that certain books have New Authority as a theme. By the way... I haven't found a title yet in which both terms are used together.

Finally I would like to talk about young parents who are interested in the New Authority model or about family coaches who want to support families with young children by using NA/NVR. A lot of them are searching but there aren't many offers of support.

In this group there is a need for tools to encounter small resistance. The parents can see this as if they have no authority, they can't draw borders, that they are not obeyed. If you think deeper then you can see that not much of this behaviour belongs in the 'red basket'.

There are few youngsters under the age of twelve that show dangerous behaviour, their safety is seldom at risk. These parents are mostly searching for an interpretation of parental authority. How must they in these times fill their parenthood. What is good parentage ? How can they not be stressed because everything isn't going the way they want it to go because discussions and disputes are gathering. With other words : How can they combine a job and parentage without risking a burn-out ?

Actual parents have an aversion for the word 'authority' but in all of their stories they mention that they can't stop controlling their children and that they struggle with affronted pride.

It's important for them to give authority a new meaning. It helps them to use the word 'authority'. They seem relieved when they hear they still can have authority and even exercise authority.

They can incredibly well practise in self-control in all the little and bigger stress moments within their family without having to solve bigger issues. They can train themselves and often they see the impact they hoped for. They will lower the stress with little actions and arrive in school in time, avoid ascending discussions, arranging will go easier....

These parents are going home satisfied if you can give them some examples on how you can make a deal with little children on the hour to go to bed or on what to put on a sandwich. Making that kind of a deal is something completely different than explaining a proposal and making an agreement on consequences if they don't follow the pact. A deal has to be a real agreement. Even here they can practise. They'll soon notice the difference. Yes, there's a whole lot less discussion about the right hour to go to bed if the children can propose what they find acceptable.

Sometimes these mums – and dads too – send you a thank you-email if they have found a way to cool down the iron, what their personal oxygen mask can be, how they arrived at making the first 'real' deals.

They can – without pressure of time – work at building their own network, bandage with other parents, neighbours, friends to talk about the difficulties of being a parent. It's a whole lot less stressful telling that you have a discussion with your child about going to bed than telling you're anxious that your child is using drugs.

These young parents can practise in self-control and in releasing the control on their child. Then they can be the one who is doing a strong announcement as soon as there is any kind of protest.

We have few or even none books where these accents are laid. So I want to plea for an accessible guide for young parents in which the accent is put on vigorous parenthood and on concrete tools or appliances that parents can daily use.