

Tips for an Effective Media Interview

A local visit from Marshall Rosenberg, or a CNVC Certified Trainer can be a great opportunity to share the concepts of NVC to local print, radio and TV media (mainstream and alternative media). By setting up an interview between a media reporter/editor and the trainer, the trainer is able to provide “expert” feedback on the process of NVC and its profound benefits. For most reporters, one-on-one interviews like this often result in a more substantial, credible and newsworthy story for their readers.

This tip sheet identifies some key strategies and suggestions that have proven effective for other NVC volunteers and public relations professionals alike. If you would like to schedule an interview between a reporter and Marshall Rosenberg, please contact Marshall’s scheduler, Deanna Bertholf by email at deanna@cnvc.org. If you would like assistance pitching an interview opportunity to the media (for Marshall Rosenberg or any NVC trainer), contact the PuddleDancer Press public relations office by email at tiffany@puddledancer.com.

TIP #1: CONSIDER YOUR OPTIONS.

- Is Marshall Rosenberg or a CNVC Certified Trainer coming to your area at a particular time? If so, try to work the interview into their schedule while their in your community.
- Consider starting with reporters or publications where you have an established a relationship (i.e., the reporter has printed stories on NVC before, you have met with the reporter before, etc.).
- Consider the workshop topic(s) your trainer is schedule to present and contact reporters and/or publications who cover that topic. For instance, if you’re hosting a full-day event on NVC in schools, consider contacting your area education reporters.

TIP #2: THINK STRATEGICALLY.

- Timing is everything! If your trainer is in town for several days, consider scheduling the interview by phone a few days to a few weeks prior to his/her visit. That way, the reporters story may hit the papers (or television sets) just before your event is scheduled, resulting in free publicity for your organization.

TIP #3: PITCH THE EXPERT AND THE STORY ANGLE.

- For some reporters, the opportunity to interview a leader of Marshall Rosenberg’s experience/stature may be enough of a selling point to schedule the interview with you. Other reporters need to be sold a “story angle” – or a particular reason why this story is newsworthy.
- Consider recent news in the media, major issues within the community, or other things that can help you shape a story “angle” for your media event or article. Remember - your angle is what makes the story newsworthy at that particular time and place.
- The story angle you choose will help you determine which publications will be interested in your story.

TIP #4: BE PREPARED.

- If a reporter schedules an interview with you or a trainer, be sure the interviewee is prepped. It’s perfectly acceptable to request the reporter to submit his/her interview questions to you ahead of time. If the reporter agrees, send the questions to the interviewee, and if possible, practice answering the questions with the interviewee ahead of time.
- Consider the location of the interview and be sure the interviewee has what he or she needs (water, talking points, etc.)
- Create some talking points that highlight your upcoming event(s) (if applicable) and your organization. Review these talking points and the “NVC Talking Points” document in your toolkit prior to the interview. Bring the talking points with you to refer to during the interview.

- Prepare to relay the main concepts of NVC in the interview (you can use the NVC Talking Points as your study guide)
- Prepare to relay the mission of your organization in the interview.
- Bring a copy of NVC media materials for the interviewer (items are included in your Promotion Toolkit).
- If your organization has a promotion coordinator, or another volunteer with experienced in media relations, ask them to attend with you.

TIP #5: SHARE ESSENTIAL INFORMATION.

- Try to relay the main concepts of NVC in the interview.
- Try to relay the mission of your organization in the interview.
- Spell the first and last name of the interviewee to the reporter.
- Remember that anything you say during an interview (by phone, by email, or in person) is considered “on the record,” and can be quoted.
- Be sure to thank the interviewer and the interviewee for their time.

TIP #6: FOLLOW-UP THE INTERVIEW OR MEDIA EVENT

- If or when the interview/story is published, consider sending a thank you note (email or handwritten) to the reporter to continue building a positive relationship.
- If or when the interview/story is published, consider sending a hard copy of the article to the interviewee for their files.