

Sisters citizens will ‘speak their peace’

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

On Wednesday evening, October 26, residents of Sisters Country will have the opportunity to explore the concept of “show respect,” the fifth tenet of the Speak Your Peace civility project.

Bryn Hazell, co-founder and volunteer facilitator/trainer with the Center for Compassionate Living in Bend, will lead the skill-building session for the fall quarterly session sponsored by Citizens4Community.

The meeting will be held in the Sisters Fire Hall community room and will follow the same schedule as earlier programs: introduction to Speak Your Peace, 5 to 6 p.m.; networking, 6 to 6:30 p.m.; and Hazell’s skill-building session, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Hazell looks at respect as the foundation for relationships and communication in all areas of our lives. Sharing the skills of Nonviolent Communication (NVC), as developed by Marshall Rosenberg, PhD, Hazell will introduce skills to help us speak honestly and clearly for our values — and listen to others in the same way.

Everyone has experienced what it feels like to have their viewpoints judged as wrong or stupid, being reduced to a label rather than a person with a different opinion.

When emotions become intensified, communication often deteriorates into word wars with name-calling, blaming, and judging, rather than discussions that lead to understanding diverse points of view. The opportunity is missed to work together to solve differences and build

consensus.

“We start to see people who disagree with us as enemies to be defeated and disparaged. We devolve into separate groups who see their positions as moral and right and other viewpoints as immoral and wrong. We lose relationship with each other and forget our shared humanity and interests,” explained Hazell.

Employing NVC skills, people can communicate and work together with respect and understanding to solve their differences.

“Everyone wants respect, consideration, and understanding. If we can practice skills that demonstrate these values, we can live together peacefully even when we disagree. Nonviolent Communication skills make this possible,” Hazell said.

For the past 16 years here in Central Oregon, Hazell has taught NVC to thousands of people from all walks of life. She also volunteers at Deer Ridge Correctional Institution in Madras where she serves on the ProSocial Communication Workgroup and has been teaching NVC classes to the inmates for six years.

The concepts and tools of NVC are designed to help people think, listen, and speak in ways that awaken compassion and generosity within themselves and between each other. NVC helps people interact in ways that leave each of them feeling more whole and connected.

The four components of the NVC model can guide a person to express how they are, or they can be used to empathetically receive how another is. Those components

are: observations; feelings; needs; and requests. When they are employed in communication, they create a continuous loop like the infinity symbol.

After growing up in a Southern California beach community, Hazell moved to New York City for school and five years of work. In 1974, she came to Oregon’s Rogue Valley to begin her career in television broadcasting, starting out as the “weather girl” for a local TV station. Her career expanded to include working as a talk show host/producer, reporter, news anchor and producer, and then she became

news director in Medford, Providence (RI), and Bend. She also worked as a TV news consultant.

After 20 years in broadcast news, Hazell followed a fork in the road and began her volunteer career and her involvement with NVC. She has served on nonprofit boards for Planned Parenthood, Human Dignity Coalition, Central Oregon Mediation, Oregon Network for Compassionate Communication, and Center for Compassionate Living. She was also a co-founder of the Women’s Resource Center and the Center for Compassionate Living.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Bryn Hazell.

Hazell shared a Rumi quote that is appropriate for the subject matter of the upcoming forum: “Out beyond wrong-doing and right-doing, there is a field. I will meet you there.”



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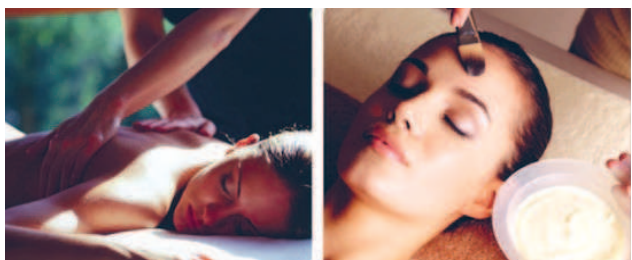
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