



## Nonviolent Communication and its effects on the caregiver-elderly relationship: A literature review

Pedro Henrique Araujo Nunes

Cristiane Vitória Ribeiro da Silva

Carlos Vinícius Teixeira Palhares

Gleisy Kelly Neves Gonçalves

Carmeci Maria de Lourdes Freitas

### ABSTRACT

Communication can be defined as the action or effect of communicating, transmitting, or receiving ideas, knowledge; is the ability or capacity to establish a dialogue, an understanding (AURÉLIO, 2020). The intrinsic connection between human beings and the communication process is of significant relevance. By language and expression, communication performs essential functions in several domains, including social interactions, cognitive development, cultural preservation, education, coordination of collective activities and manifestation of creativity. Additionally, communication serves as the foundation for our cultural identity, consolidates our interpersonal bonds and drives the advancement of society. A conception denoted by the growing relevance attributed to the concept of communication and the subsequent increase in research in this domain, and which have their roots in the intrinsic nature of the human being, that seeks to establish communicative interactions to promote harmonious global development.

**Keywords:** Communication, Development.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Communication can be defined as the action or effect of communicating, transmitting, or receiving ideas, knowledge; is the ability or capacity to establish a dialogue, an understanding (AURÉLIO, 2020). The intrinsic connection between human beings and the communication process is of significant relevance. By language and expression, communication performs essential functions in several domains, including social interactions, cognitive development, cultural preservation, education, coordination of collective activities and manifestation of creativity. Additionally, communication serves as the foundation for our cultural identity, consolidates our interpersonal bonds and drives the advancement of society. A conception denoted by the growing relevance attributed to the concept of communication and the subsequent increase in research in this domain, and which have their roots in the intrinsic nature of the human being, that seeks to establish communicative interactions to promote harmonious global development. Communication is considered an inherent need of the human being, which is, in essence, a communicative being. This process is characterized by mutual interactivity, in which participants share not only the form, but also the content



and context of communication. Furthermore, communication requires alternating roles, in which one of the partners assumes the role of sender, passing the turn to the receiver. From the moment of birth, human beings demonstrate a readiness to acquire language (CHOMSKY, 1982), which is formed from your own experience and surrounding environment. The child, from birth, is already endowed with a fundamental basis that gives him the inherent socializing characteristic through the ability to establish communicative interactions (BRUNNER, 1988; REBELO, 2014).

Non-Violent Communication (NC) was conceived in the 1960s by clinical psychologist Marshall Rosenberg, with the primary objective of cultivating mutual understanding, empathy, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, aiming to mitigate verbal and emotional violence in human interactions. It encourages individuals to recognize their own and others' emotions, identify essential needs, and communicate in a non-accusatory manner (ALMEIDA, 2019).

The approach assumes significant importance in promoting the health of the elderly, as it improves the quality of social interactions and communications. This translates into reducing stress, strengthening interpersonal relationships, promoting self-esteem, and facilitating conflict resolution. (ROSENBERG, 2003). Furthermore, NVC plays a crucial role in improving communication with healthcare professionals, encouraging greater adherence to treatments, and contributing to the reduction of loneliness, as well as encouraging active aging. In an additional aspect, NVC plays an important role in preventing abuse and neglect, which culminates in improvements in the physical and emotional well-being of the elderly (“ACTIVE AGING: A HEALTH POLICY”, [s.d.]).

From this presented perspective, the bibliographic review consists of presenting the insertion of NVC in the interpersonal relationship between caregivers and elderly people, enabling a reflection on violence linked to aging and encompassing a subjective perspective of the caregiver. However, consistent with the proposal, it is essential that the sociodemographic design of research and productions corresponds to the Brazilian social, economic and political panorama. The legal configuration established by law 10,741, of October 1, 2003, which provides for the Statute of the Elderly and provides other measures (BRASIL, 2016) and the sociocultural structuring, elucidated by an analysis provided, is noteworthy. (MOREIRA & CALDAS 2007), It is observed that a substantial portion of elderly people, including those in the age group of 75 to 84 years, as well as a majority proportion of those reaching the 85-year mark, manifest some degree of disability. This situation translates into a growing dependence of the elderly on third parties to meet their needs, often members of their own families. The authors define disability as a change in the functioning of an organ or system that imposes limitations on the individual's daily activities.

However, a divergent context stands out between the guidelines established by the National Health Policy for the Elderly (1999), which aims to stimulate quality of care, and the situation of violence against the elderly in which, according to data collected by the Ombudsman's Office of the Ministry of Rights



Humans and Citizenship, in the first five months of 2023, through the Dial 100 reporting route (including telephone, email and social networks), Brazil recorded 37,441 cases of negligence, 19,987 of abandonment, 129,501 of physical violence, 120,351 of psychological violence and 15,211 of financial violence. There was an increase in all of them compared to the numbers from the same period last year (FERREIRA, 2023).

## 2 OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this article is to perform a narrative bibliographical review covering the relationship between CNV and the caregiver-elderly relationship, adding the biopsychosocial factors of the bonds, the sociopolitical structuring and administration, the types of violence incident and the connection with the mental health. In this perspective, all weighted attributes are associated with a macro perspective of interpersonal relationships, their segmentations and (re)partitions. Moreover, to understand credible possibilities for implementing the CNV in the referenced scenario.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

To formulate this work, bibliographical review research was used, with a literary outline available in scientific articles and books, to select pertinent information in the attribution of CNV in the caregiver-elderly relationship, covering the social, political, demographic, and economic path Brazilian, considering the challenges faced in the context of violence against the elderly and the biopsychosocial demands involved, including those of caregivers. The criteria were publications between the years 2000 and 2023, to outline recent contexts and challenges, and, for socio-historical analysis, publications between the years 1960 and 2023 were analyzed. After the survey, critical reading, and analysis of the chosen materials.

## 4 RESULTS

The origins of Nonviolent Communication (NVC) date back to the 1960s and 1970s, a period in which clinical psychologist, Marshall B. Rosenberg, conceived of the ongoing research process. However, the CNV rose to notoriety with the publication of the second edition of its work entitled "Non-Violent Communication: A Language of Life", in 2003. The CNV's trajectory is notable for Rosenberg's commitment to fostering mutual understanding and peace, through promoting compassionate communication (Mayes, 2010).

The conception of the CNV revealed itself to be permeated by multiple sources of influence. Marshall Rosenberg established a significant collaboration with Carl Rogers, an eminent humanistic psychologist, whose principles of empathy, unconditional respect and authenticity played a leading role in shaping NVC. (Bugental, 1964). Additionally, Rosenberg found inspiration in leaders of the nonviolence movement, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., whose peaceful struggles for social justice



and equality left an indelible mark on their approach. (Losurdo, 2015). The convergence of these influences has played a vital role in devising an approach that places primary importance on empathy, mutual understanding, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

CNV was introduced in Brazilian territory approximately two decades ago, through the social researcher Dominic Barter. This initiative occurred after his contact with Marshall Rosenberg, a prominent disseminator of the approach, during his investigations with the purpose of promoting the facilitation of dialogue in conflicting situations within the school environment. (SCHERER, 2020). Due to its origins in Brazil, CNV has enjoyed significant dissemination and exploration, particularly in the fields of Psychology and Psychopedagogy. (LUANA et al., [2021]).

Depending on the arrival of the CNV in Brazil, for the objective purposes of this study, the context for measuring the elderly population and the incidence of violence in the same period have been associated, in which, according to data from the 2000 Census, the proportion of elderly in Brazilian population it corresponded to 8.6%, which was equivalent to a contingent of approximately 14.5 million individuals. Compared to 1991 figures, there was a 35.5% increase in the total number of elderly people. At that time, the proportion of this demographic group in relation to the total population was 7,3% (ROBERTO; RAMOS, [s.d.]).

Adjunct to the population index, the rates of violence against this population are simultaneously analyzed. The data reveal that violence and accidents represent 3.5% of deaths in the elderly population, occupying the sixth position in the list of causes of mortality, behind diseases of the circulatory system, neoplasms, respiratory, digestive, and endocrine diseases. Each year, around 13,000 elderly people lose their lives due to accidents and violence, which translates into a daily average of 35 deaths, with 66% of cases corresponding to men and 34% to women (IBIDEM, [s.d.]).

In work environment with families who are involved in situations of violence against the elderly, these violations often derive largely from the inexperience or lack of training of the people responsible for directly providing care to the elderly. Additionally, in professional practice, it is observed that the information presented in *Caderno de Violência Contra a Pessoa Idosa* (2007) highlights several risk factors, such as stress and social isolation of caregivers, economic challenges or economic dependence on victim, harmful use of substances, the presence of various mental disorders and the circumstance of a single person responsible for care, which can significantly contribute to the occurrence of such abuse (GARDIN, 2015).

With the increase in the number of elderly people in Brazil (MIRANDA, 2016), significant challenges have arisen related to the quality of life, health, and well-being of this portion of the population (CACHIONI, 2013). In this context, NVC emerges as a crucial tool to face these challenges, playing a fundamental role in reducing violence against the elderly, through the promotion of more respectful and empathetic communication between caregivers and the elderly. Through this methodology, caregivers



acquire skills to communicate their concerns and disappointments in a non-aggressive way, preventing potential confrontations that could result in abusive or negligent practices. (PELIZZOLI, 2012). In relation to the stress and social isolation of caregivers, it provides ways to express feelings and seek support in a healthy way.

Caregivers often experience considerable emotional burden (SANTOS, 2010), and NVC can be an effective resource to ease this burden by allowing them to express their concerns and needs to other family members or friends in a healthy way. In the context of economic challenges and the victim's economic dependence, the CNV can be a bridge for negotiating and resolving sensitive financial issues, helping those involved to understand each party's concerns and find solutions that meet everyone's needs. (LIMA-COSTA, 2003). Regarding harmful substance use and varied mental disorders, it promotes open communication and mutual understanding, where it is especially important to deal with these complex issues in a constructive way, seeking help and treatment when necessary. Moreover, CNV also helps caregivers who face the situation of being solely responsible for caring for the elderly. It encourages seeking support, communicating with other family members, and building a broader support network (BRITO, 2000).

## 5 CONCLUSION

This literature review conducted a comprehensive analysis of current knowledge in the context of the relationship between caregivers and the elderly, the effective implementation of NVC and violence against the elderly in Brazil. It covered a wide variety of relevant perspectives, theories, and studies. When examining the available literature, several conclusions and trends emerged, highlighting the importance and complexity of this multifaceted topic.

A significant conclusion of this study lies in the possible association between the biopsychosocial weaknesses of caregivers and the incidence of violence against the elderly. This emphasizes the relevance of promoting NVC as an interrelation tool and its potential impact on individuals' psychological well-being. Furthermore, the lack of studies that comprehensively explore the application of NVC as a strategic approach in relationships between caregivers, elderly people and family members was highlighted. This observation is particularly relevant, since the effectiveness of applied NVC suggests significant benefits, although it has not yet been fully integrated into population studies, formal training of caregivers or training programs in communication strategies.

Moreover, the literature analysis highlighted the demographic trend of an increase in the elderly population with some degree of disability, making them dependent, as well as the growth in the number of caregivers who face disabilities without access to psychosocial support. This scenario correlates with an increase in psychological and physical violence and negligence, a decline in the well-being of those involved, emotional overload, economic disorders, and mental health problems. This identification



highlights the need to address this demand through effective training, focused on the application of NVC for caregivers and family members of elderly people, offering guidelines for future research and practice.

It is crucial to recognize that, despite the comprehensive scope, there are still gaps in knowledge that require further investigation. The correlations presented in this study are based on theoretical assumptions, indicating the need for objective research into the origins and causal effects of violence and mental health issues. Likewise, evidence-based studies are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of NVC in the relationship between caregivers and elderly people.

In summary, this review reinforces the importance of an in-depth biopsychosocial approach to relationships between caregivers and elderly people, the application of NVC as a theoretical model and its continuous impact on promoting well-being through relationships. It provides pertinent insights for researchers, professionals and all those interested in holistic studies on NVC and the elderly caregiver population. As new research is conducted and the field evolves, it is essential to continue to investigate, inquire and expand the understanding of these social relations and their consequences.

At last, the need for future studies and practices that address these complex correlations is emphasized, integrating different areas of research to improve our understanding of the central theme and its biopsychosocial implications in a broader context. This advance in the direction will certainly contribute to significant progress in the field and to improving the quality of life of caregivers and elderly people in Brazil.



## REFERENCES

- REBELO, A. O desenvolvimento cognitivo e tomada de decisão das pessoas surdocegas. *Revista de Psicologia da Criança e do Adolescente*, Lisboa, v. 5, n. 1, p. 211–221, 2014. Disponível em: <http://revistas.lis.ulusiada.pt/index.php/rpca/article/view/1134>. Acesso em: 7 out. 2023.
- Rosenberg M B, *Comunicação não violenta: Técnicas para aprimorar relacionamentos pessoais e profissionais*. Marshall B. Rosenberg; [tradução Mário Vilela] São Paulo: Ágora, 2006.
- ENVELHECIMENTO ATIVO: UMA POLÍTICA DE SAÚDE. Disponível em: [https://bvsmis.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/envelhecimento\\_ativo.pdf](https://bvsmis.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/envelhecimento_ativo.pdf). Acesso em: 10 out. 2023.
- GARDIN, Larissa Beck. VIOLÊNCIA CONTRA A PESSOA IDOSA: O FORTALECIMENTO DE VÍNCULOS FAMILIARES A PARTIR DA ADOÇÃO DA COMUNICAÇÃO NÃO VIOLENTA. I Seminário de Práticas Socioculturais, [s. l.], 2015. Disponível em: <https://home.unicruz.edu.br/mercosul/pagina/anais/2018/>. Acesso em: 10 out. 2023.
- FERREIRA, Aurélio Buarque de Holanda. *Dicionário Eletrônico Aurélio Século XXI*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Nova Fronteira e Lexikon Informática, 1999.
- Estatuto do idoso: lei federal nº 10.741, de 01 de outubro de 2003. Brasília, DF: Secretaria Especial dos Direitos Humanos, 2004.
- BRASIL. [Constituição (1988)]. *Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil de 1988*. Brasília, DF: Presidência da República, [2016]. Disponível em: [http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil\\_03/Constituicao/Constituicao.htm](http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/Constituicao/Constituicao.htm). Acesso em: 7 out. 2023.
- ALMEIDA, Maise Nunes de Souza. SOUZA, Maria José Dantas de. NASCIMENTO, Lídio França do. A comunicação não violenta como ferramenta para auxiliar nas relações pessoais e interpessoais: Um estudo sistemático. *Revista Científica Multidisciplinar Núcleo do Conhecimento*. Ano 04, Ed. 11, Vol. 05, pp. 91-105. Novembro de 2019. ISSN: 2448-0959, Link de acesso: <https://www.nucleodoconhecimento.com.br/psicologia/relacoes-pessoais>
- MOREIRA, M. D.; CALDAS, C. P. A importância do cuidador no contexto da saúde do idoso. *Escola Anna Nery*, v. 11, n. 3, p. 520–525, set. 2007.
- FERREIRA, Luiz Cláudio. Violências contra idosos podem ter diferentes facetas. *AgenciaBrasil*, Brasília, p. 1-4, 15 jun. 2023. Disponível em: <https://agenciabrasil.ebc.com.br/direitos-humanos/noticia/2023-06/violencias-contra-idosos-podem-ter-diferentes-facetas>. Acesso em: 7 out. 2023.
- Azgin, Bilge. (2018). A Review on “Non-Violent Communication: A Language of Life” by Marshall B. Rosenberg. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*. 7. 759. 10.7596/taksad. v7i2.1550.
- LUANA, D. et al. Comunicação não violenta: revisão bibliográfica de publicações sobre a CNV no Brasil 1. [s.l.: s.n.]. Disponível em: <https://www.portalintercom.org.br/anais/nacional2021/resumos/ij03/dara-luana-lima-albuquerque.pdf>. Acesso em: 8 out. 2023.
- Mayes, I. (2010). Nonviolent Communication: Tools and Talking-Points for Practicing the Person-Centered Approach. *The Person-Centered Journal*, 17(1-2), 90-99.



Bugental, J. F. T. (1964). The Third Force in Psychology. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 4(1), 19-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/002216786400400102>

Losurdo, D. (2015). *Non-violence: A History beyond the Myth*. Lanham: Lexington Books

MIRANDA, Gabriella M. D.; MENDES, Antonio C. G.; DA SILVA, Ana L. A. O envelhecimento populacional brasileiro: desafios e consequências sociais atuais e futuras. *Revista Brasileira de Geriatria e Gerontologia*, 2016. Disponível em: <<https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/4038/403846785012.pdf>>. Acesso em: 11 out. 2023.

CACHIONI, M.; BATISTONI, S. S. T. Bem-estar subjetivo e psicológico na velhice sob a perspectiva do conviver e do aprender. *Revista Kairós-Gerontologia*, [S. l.], v. 15, n. Especial14, p. 9–22, 2013. DOI: 10.23925/2176-901X.2012v15iEspecial14p9-22. Disponível em: <https://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/kairos/article/view/15226>. Acesso em: 11 out. 2023

PELIZZOLI, Marcelo L. Introdução à Comunicação Não Violenta (CNV) - reflexões sobre fundamentos e método. [s.l.: s.n.], 2012. Disponível em: <<https://editora.ufpe.br/books/catalog/book/389>>. Acesso em: 11 out. 2023.

SANTOS, Ariene A.; PAVARINI, Sofia C. L. Perfil dos cuidadores de idosos com alterações cognitivas em diferentes contextos de vulnerabilidade social. *Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem*, v. 31, n. 1, p. 115–122, 2010. Disponível em: <<https://www.scielo.br/j/rgenf/a/zSKW7vdcgHNzG3wy36FL6fD/#>>. Acesso em: 11 out. 2023.

LIMA-COSTA, Maria Fernanda; BARRETO, Sandhi; GIATTI, Luana; et al. Desigualdade social e saúde entre idosos brasileiros: um estudo baseado na Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios. *Cadernos de Saúde Pública*, v. 19, n. 3, p. 745–757, 2003. Disponível em: <<https://www.scielo.br/j/rgenf/a/zSKW7vdcgHNzG3wy36FL6fD/#>>. Acesso em: 11 out. 2023.

BRITO, Maria Luísa da Silva. *A Saúde mental dos prestadores de cuidados a familiares idosos*. Repositório Aberto da Universidade do Porto, 2000. Disponível em: <<http://hdl.handle.net/10216/9933>>. Acesso em: 11 out. 2023.