

Voices from Outside

Greetings AVP family,

COVID-19 has brought significant disruption in business as usual, and that has included our work everywhere: inside prisons, in communities and in schools.

So our work has shifted to trying to maintain support and connection within the AVP family. Here we hear from outside (civilian) facilitators about what AVP means to them and how AVP is helping in the time of COVID.

We all look forward to the day when we can again be together and continue practicing AVP and strengthening our AVP communities.

In Transforming Power,

The AVP NY Leadership Team:

Funny Valentine Doyle, Stellar Steve Bradley, Charismatic Coralie Joseph, Adventurous Alisha Kohn, Jubilant Jo Clayson, Joyful John Sheridan, Jumpin' Jill McLellan

Contagious CC



I've been doing AVP almost every month for so long it has become part of my life like going for a walk or grocery shopping. It's just

what I do.

So when we were suddenly and abruptly shut out, it was like a piece of myself was missing. I've been able to reflect and get some clarity about how central AVP is to my sense of purpose, to supporting a positive outlook. And with my time with the

guys at Green Haven or Fishkill or Woodbourne only a memory I've used all the TP [Transforming Power] skills to keep myself moving in a positive direction.

So right now as we wait anxiously to go back inside and do a workshop, I think Number 11 - *Patience and Persistence* - is my prime for getting me through this tough time. We will come out the other side if we just keep working our TP guides and staying on the positive path.

--Contagious CC Carolyn Polikarpus

Dancing David



For many years I've had the privilege of participating and facilitating AVP workshops in Groveland Correctional Facility. I learned something about myself in every workshop. The depth of our sharing was therapeutic for me. We all need each other's help at times to grow and see the errors of our ways and see the goodness we have in our hearts. I consider all the men I worked with to be my brothers, and all the women my sisters.

At this very strange time when we can't get together for workshops, I'm relying on a mandala I have taped to the wall and my wallet card. They are a constant reminder for me of my AVP community, and help me get through these difficult times. They set me straight when I begin to stray.

We miss you all and hope you have good health and peace in your lives.

—Dancing David Snaith with Daring Donna Starr

Caring Cristina



For me AVP is a space where we can share our deep commitment to fight the root causes of violence, oppression and racism with kindness and conviction, with humor and friendship. It is a community of fighters that dare to create a collective space of peace in places where violence maybe the more common path.

—Caring Cristina Diez

Really Rosey



As this challenging year comes to a close, I reflect on AVP in my life. I am thinking about the *Help Along the Way* list on our TP cards, where it suggests we "make friends who will support you. Support the best in them."

I am thankful for my AVP friends, and the larger AVP community, including the women I met as an outside facilitator at Albion CF. When I think of these folks, I am reminded that I am not alone, that I don't seek the non-violent way alone. In this time of limited contact, I find that this idea in itself gives me courage to continue to choose – to listen to understand, to sit with my feelings before reacting, to expect the best. It makes a difference.

Best wishes.

—Really Rosey Oaks-Lee

Stellar Steve



Over the past nine months it has helped me to ruminate on the profound AVP exercise “*Human to Human*” (Advanced manual, D-97/98) and how

our masked encounters with most others nowadays require us to work hard to connect with those we see only from the eyes up. The core of “*Human to Human*” is to experience empathy and trust, and in the current moment it is both coincidental and ironic that the exercise’s stated purpose concludes with “*to see self and others more clearly, beyond the masks*”. (This exercise predates Covid by a few decades!)

It is historically a very difficult and risky exercise due to the level of trust it requires, but as the pandemic rages on and we grow more and more adept at communicating to a considerable

degree with eyes alone, I wonder if once we return to physical workshops in the hallowed AVP Circle, “*Human to Human*” will be a less stressful and more beneficial exercise to conduct and experience. One entreaty as the exercise winds down asks each pair of participants to look into each other’s eyes “*with no games, no pretense, no power trips, no staring competitions, no roles at all*”—which is very much how I see encounters unfolding more and more commonly as the pandemic continues, and as people continue to yearn for simple human-to-human connections.

At the end of “*Human to Human*”, the participants are asked to each give their partner some nonverbal expression in appreciation for what they have just experienced together, and while this is usually the easiest and most natural part of the exercise, it may well become even more so post-pandemic as people have been doing this over the tops of their masks for many long months already. The final piece of this movingly glorious exercise simply encourages participants to “*relax and just be you and just human beings on the path, who have recog-*

nized each other”, before finishing with “*Feel the experience you just had: that deep sense of your common humanity, of the goodness that’s there in each one of us... ..that is at the heart of Transforming Power.*” Oddly enough, thanks to Covid my AVP universe is more than ripe enough now to make “*Human to Human*” a more regular part of my prison-based Advanced workshops!

—Stellar Steve Bradley

Secure Shirley



AVP opened the door to my own healing and through it I have witnessed the healing of hundreds if not thousands of others. And when we

witness the healing of others, we can heal as well.

The structure of AVP lays the foundation for healing.

- We sit in a circle. The circle represents equality—every voice carries equal weight. We are all teachers and we are all learners.
- We begin by setting boundaries. Community agreements explicitly state how we will be with one another. This creates brave space, allowing for people to be vulnerable and authentic with themselves, and perhaps with the group.
- We work in teams of facilitators so there are multiple voices leading, guiding. So that if someone cannot hear my words, they have others to listen to.
- The workshops are experiential. There is no lecturing. We learn by practicing together.
- We strive to be equally welcoming of all people. A desire to participate as much as possible is the only ask.
- And, perhaps most importantly, AVP reminds us that at our core we are all good, no matter what we may have done or said or thought.

What the world needs now is love, sweet love, and AVP.

—Secure Shirley Way

Mystic Margaret

2020 AVP Calendar
January—Sing Sing workshop. *Transforming Power*

February—Taconic workshop. *Expect the best*

March—Workshops cancelled. Eventually come to realize that the biggest mistake of the year was buying a 2020 planner. *Use surprise and humor. . .*

April—Thinking so much about the inside team. *Listen . . .*

May—AVPUSA annual meeting goes virtual and we read “voices from the inside”. *Build community. . .*

June—Explore how we can use virtual technologies to strengthen and grow AVP. *Make friends...*

July—No AVP workshops, but create “Deepening Racial Awareness” series with AVP buddies. *Work toward new ways of overcoming injustice...*

August—Participate in the on-line workshop “White People Confronting Racism”. Reflect on the times when my actions as an AVP facilitator have hurt BIPOC facilitators and participants. I can’t change what I have done and can’t make amends in person, but I send mental apology and work on doing better. *When you have done wrong, admit. . .*

September—On-line memorial service, and awareness of how many have been lost. *Care for others . . .*

October—Start in-person workshop (huge joy), but as COVID cases rise do the right thing and close it down. *Learn to trust your inner sense. . .*

November—Do T4F on line and recruit new outside facilitators to join the inside teams when the gates open again. *Be patient and persistent. . .*

December—“Women of Courage” won’t be in person at BHCF and TCF this year, but I cherish the memories and send prayers. *Reach for that. . .*

Courage to everyone. We are lighting candles in these dark times, remembering the beautiful, courageous core within each of us—Transforming Power—and repeating “next year in person” —Mystic Margaret Lechner



Friendly Fred



Before I became involved in AVP I was going through a very difficult time in my life. I was sort of a loner, my marriage was falling apart. My oldest son had

dropped out of college and had been sentenced to nine months in jail. I was dealing with a lot of conflict in my family and in my business. I didn't have anyone to talk to about my feelings. Then a Quaker friend told me about the AVP conflict resolution program.

That was 40 years ago. I loved the Basic workshop and decided that I wanted to become a facilitator. I began to do workshops in places like Fishkill, Green Haven and Sing Sing.

AVP has changed my life. I love doing workshops and I have learned so much from the great facilitators in AVP (Larry Apsey, Steve Angell, Mary Gray Legg, Nancy Nothhelfer, Fran Delahanty and many others). I've learned communication skills that helped to save my relationship with my family. I've improved my leadership skills. I've made lots of new friends, both inside and outside. I've developed my organizational skills and I've found a new purpose in my life. I've found Transforming Power!

I have changed and AVP has changed. I loved doing workshops at Sing Sing for 30 years. I've enjoyed seeing the AVP program in Westchester go from six workshops a year to sixty workshops a year. I enjoyed planning the first national conferences and organizing AVP-USA. I've enjoyed creating exercises and writing manuals. I was pleased to lead the team that organized and planned the 2020 AVP-USA National Gathering including finding the site, planning the program and building the web site. But then Covid19 came along and I was sad when we had to cancel the live conference.

Since the Covid19 pandemic I have taken a vacation from leading workshops and this has given me an opportunity to focus on developing new exercises, planning outreach and recruitment efforts and developing fundraising methods. I currently coordinate the AVP program at Garner Prison in Connecticut and I can't wait to get back to doing prison workshops again. I love AVP!

—*Friendly Fred Feucht*

PS: My oldest son taught himself how to code while he was in jail and has had a very successful career in the software industry. He has also studied math and physics for many years and was recently approved to publish his physics paper on new math for quantum mechanics.

Jumpin' Jill



This pandemic has been frustrating in lots of ways including no in-person workshops. For the first few months I could only see my grandchildren

from afar. This was especially hard because they live nearby and usually spent a lot of time with us.

I used some TP guides including **4. Base your position on truth (science)** and **b. Respect and care about others**. This meant following the CDC guidelines to keep myself and the others around me safe. It meant not getting close to my family members or friends, giving people in a store a wide berth and waiting until someone was done selecting items rather than passing them. It meant calling people everywhere to check on them and see if they needed anything.

I decided to use the resources we had so early on, I sewed up well over a hundred masks for local farmworkers, the food bank folks, family and friends. When I ran short of elastic or fabric, friends and neighbors shared by leaving bags of supplies outside

the door. When someone found a source of elastic, it was a cause for celebration! We donated produce from our small farm to the food bank and put it out by the road at our produce stand (no prices marked, donation only). Friends and neighbors came to pick their own produce and play with our baby goats while staying a safe distance away.

I am especially missing our annual AVP event at Auburn called Craft Night where we make amazing holiday cards and ornaments with our facilitators and support group participants. This year my crafts consist of sewing Christmas masks and making wreaths from evergreens, grapevines and pinecones, mostly by myself. So what have I learned? Love and care and sharing resources transcends the physical distance we are needing to keep. Transforming Power is something I used mostly in close interactions, but I have used I Messages on the phone and in Zoom meetings. My examples seem so minor in comparison to the miracles we have all experienced from time to time, but keeping the faith and knowing all our AVPers everywhere are doing the same is inspiring me.

Till we meet again,

—*Jumpin' Jill McLellan*

Blessed Bea

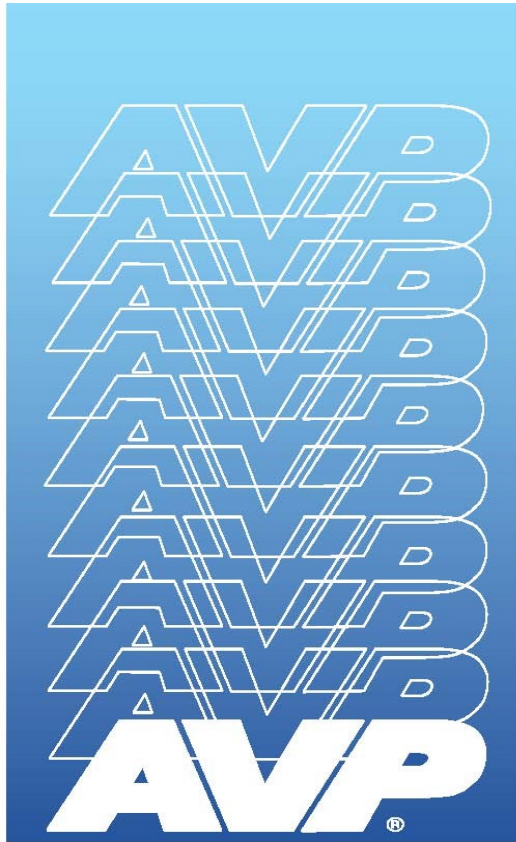


In AVP we join a community of good will. Together, we journey toward becoming our best selves. As I follow the process of AVP work-

shops, I grow, grounded in Transforming Power. In deep gratitude to those who have gone before us and to all those now in AVP, I know my true self is being healed and nurtured. And together we are part of making the World whole.

Greetings, dear AVP Friends.

—*Blessed Bea, Beatrice Beguin*



ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

Note: Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

Virtual AVP Workshops are happening!

At a computer near you.

See www.avpusa.org the "Get Involved" tab for listings. We need you!



Our 2020 budget calls for **\$28,150** in public support.

To date we have received **\$22,026**.

Please do what you can.

Thank you very much!!

Return Service Requested

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT / NEW YORK

2019 Workshop Summary Report [AVP New York has held only a few virtual AVP workshops in 2020.]

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| ALBION Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 43 Apprentices trained: 11 | FISHKILL Prison Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 16 | WESTCHESTER COUNTY JAIL Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 55 | NIAGARA FRONTIER AC Teen + young adt wksp count: 1 Teen + young adt part't count: 8 |
| ATTICA Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 66 Apprentices: 8 | GREEN HAVEN Prison English lang. workshop count: 18 Spanish lang. workshop count: 2 Participant count: 275 Mini workshop count: 2 Mini participant count: 38 Apprentices trained: 56 | WOODBOURNE Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 124 Apprentices trained: 14 | WESTCHESTER Area Council Adult workshop count: 6 Adult participant count: 72 Youth workshop count: 1 Youth participant count: 6 Facilitator Days: 2 Facilitator Day participants: 26 Apprentices trained: 22 |
| AUBURN Prison Workshop count: 17 Participant count: 179 Facilitator Day count: 1 Facilitator Day participants: 15 Apprentices trained: 12 | GREENE Prison Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 44 Apprentices trained: 6 | BRONX Area Council Teen + young adult wksp ct: 5 Teen + young adult part't ct: 43 Teen + adult apprentices tr'd: 15 | AVP/NY PRISON WKSPs: Prisons served: 20 Workshop count: 150 Participant count: 1,786 Apprentices trained: 193 Mini workshop count: 3 Mini participant count: 46 Facilitator Day (mini): 1 Facilitator Day part't count: 15 Inside facilitators: 258 Outside adult facilitators: 101 |
| BEDFORD HILLS Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 11 Participant count: 122 Apprentices trained: 9 | GROVELAND Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 68 Apprentices trained: 7 | CATSKILL Area Council Youth short workshop count: 3 Youth short participant count: 67 Youth mini workshop count: 3 Youth mini part't count: 123 | AVP/NY COMMUNITY WKSPs: Community workshops: 18 Participant count: 202 Adult part't count: 127 Teen + yg adult ct: 64 Youth part't count: 11 |
| CAYUGA Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 54 Apprentices trained: 7 | OTISVILLE Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 101 Apprentices trained: 6 | CENTRAL NEW YORK AC Teen + young adt wksp count: 1 Teen + young adt part't count: 14 Multigen workshop count: 2 Multigen participant count: 27 Adult workshop count: 2 Adult participant count: 25 Youth mini workshop count: 1 Youth mini part't count: 6 Adult apprentices trained: 10 | Apprentices trained: 47 Adult apprentices: 32 Teen + yg adt apps: 15 |
| CLINTON ANNEX Prison Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 34 Apprentices trained: 7 | SING SING Prison English lang. wksp count: 21 Spanish + biligual. wksp ct: 4 Participant count: 280 Apprentices trained: 9 | ELMIRA Area Council Adult workshop count: 1 Adult participant count: 7 Adult mini workshop count: 1 Adult mini participant count: 11 | Short workshops: 5 Adult part't count: 9 Youth part't count: 76 |
| CLINTON MAIN Prison Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 35 | TACONIC Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 41 Mini workshop count: 1 Mini participant count: 8 Apprentices trained: 9 | GENESEE VALLEY Area Council Multigen workshop count: 1 Multigen participant count: 12 | Mini workshops: 6 Multigen part't ct: 18 Youth part't count: 56 |
| EASTERN Prison Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 39 | WENDE Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 40 Apprentices trained: 9 | MID-HUDSON Area Council Adult mini workshop count: 1 Adult mini participant count: 7 | Outside adult facilitators: 101 Teen facilitators (under 18): 16 |
| ELMIRA Prison Workshop count: 9 Participant count: 119 Apprentices trained: 11 | | | |
| FCI RAY BROOK (Federal Prison) Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 120 Apprentices trained: 9 | | | |