

the TRANSFORMER

SUMMER 2005
MER

Just another Spring Day at the Headlands ...



Just another Day at the Headlands ... AVP-USA CONFERENCE 2005 30 Years & Going Strong!!!

Cover: *Left to Right* Bench: *Diana Couch, Giri Sequoia, Ellen Flanders, Fred Feucht* Sidewalk: *Ann Ward, Pat Hardy*

Filling AVP Community Workshops Notes from one of the Breakout Groups at the National Gathering

Differently Dotty Joos, Occidental, California

Filling those Community Workshops:

A lot of people attended this unfacilitated workshop so we just went around the room, each person saying something that had worked for their group. In true brainstorm spirit, this sparked new ideas. Everything is in the mix below, roughly sorted by type of contribution.

- Prepare a schedule for six months to a year so people have a choice.
- Keep a database of contacts. Send out postcards, flyers. Hand-addressed are more likely to be opened. Write their name on the top of the flyer and a note if you can; refer to your database for “notes” of past conversations and use them when you call again. Keep the contacts up. Telephone. Be considerate...”Is this a good time to call?” “How’s the new house you were about to move into when I called you in March?” “Would you like to stay on the list?” Let your contact be a start to the sense of trust and community that is AVP.
- Have a listed telephone, even if it is a message phone under a box in someone’s closet. Several people can take turns calling in for the messages and following up.
- If you have to cancel a workshop because of enrollment, reschedule and telephone each person who signed up (that’s not many calls). You don’t have to tell them why you’re rescheduling, only that there was no way to carry through on the workshop. (Apologize; you’ve broken a commitment to them.) One group sets a deadline for enrollment one week before the start of the workshop (stating in the brochure: “late enrollments will be put on a waiting list.”) Then they wait a couple of days for last-minute enrollments before telephoning.
- Split up the work. Locals do logistics. Invite facilitators from out of town.
- Get a host organization to provide a site and food.

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

- Make representations to “service groups” such as Kiwanis, Optomists, Soroptomists, Toastmasters, Rotary, Lions, Veterans for Peace, M.E.N. (Men Evolving Nonviolently) and similar batterer’s programs, Mujeres Unidas, Nonviolent Communication (Marshall Rosenberg’s NVC), and look in Yellow Pages under “Clubs”...emphasize the elements of respect, self-value, and free choice in the AVP program.
- Give minis in churches (sometimes this has to be “approved by the Board” to allow sufficient lead time). Some churches will put the workshops in their bulletins. Most all allow posting on their bulletin boards. (Maybe make a special poster for them rather than a generic one.) Some receptive churches have included Quakers, United Methodist Women, Unitarians, Catholic Charities. Look for names like “Social Concerns Committee.”
- Knock on doors of homeless shelters, half-way houses, etc. Offer as follow-up to conventional nonviolent training, usually court-ordered.
- Contact organizations that advocate for children, target parents. Emphasize communication skills. Parents with uncommunicative teenagers are very responsive. “Beyond ‘Nanny-911’.”
- Offer the workshop to the local Peace Center; it is often a place where many groups meet, including people interested in prison welfare.
- Go to events and set up a table with literature, schedule, sign-ups. Be sure to get phone numbers and legible email addresses so you can contact them later. Pass out “free” tickets to a mini.
- “I targeted teachers and got it in the schools.”
- Offer CEU’s (Continuing Education Credits, where teachers, nurses, and certain other licensed professionals must accumulate on a regular basis. Note: This requires the oversight of a licensed professional in the targeted field.
- Offer the workshop through the Junior College or another community education program such as those advertised by “Parks and Rec.”
- Vary the name and appeal statement to suit the targeted audience. Name ideas: Conflict Resolution Workshop, Cultivating the Spirit of Nonviolence, Creating Peace. Appeal ideas: “Way to make a difference,” Acquire mediation and conflict resolution skills,” “Spend a weekend; Change your life,” Would you give up a weekend to...?” People usually don’t see themselves as needing “nonviolence training,” but may respond to the opportunity to “learn new skills.”
- Post flyers in bookstores, cafés, colleges, health food stores, community bulletin boards, or anywhere people have to line up (laundromats, bus stops, theatres).
- Post in local newspaper...check their policy; it usually has to be submitted

(See “*Filling Workshops*” on page 4)

A New Zealand Offering
THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES
That Must be LIVED & BREATHED!

Dashing Dynamic Dave, NZ

I guess you could say I had a very violent childhood with what was done to me – and I did to others. I have been in and out of institutions since 1974 when I was five, in prison since I was a teenager, on a charge of murdering someone I was falsely led to believe had abused a little boy I cared about. Most of my family judged – and generally rejected me for this, all except for my youngest sister, who never wa-

vered from her love for me.

It was very hard to later hear news that she had been sexually abused by my older cousin, who has almost the same name as I do – I had never met him. He was convicted of this offense, and came to jail, into a separate voluntary segregation unit for sexual offenders, afraid of meeting me and facing possible revenge..

Because I've been inside for a long time, and developed trust here, I was put onto a carpentry work crew, and was doing some building down at this unit. I was working on the roof of the building when I saw my cousin walk into the yard – some-

(See "New Zealand Offering" on page 5)

("Filling Workshops" continued from page 3)

several weeks ahead of the desired publication date. Name the publication date you wish; don't leave it up to them.

- Get interviewed by local paper, radio show, TV.
- Get it on the "Community Service" or "Diversion Program" court list. How to engage "court-ordered" participants: after the first session (about 3 hours), explain about attendance being voluntary, go around the circle and ask each person individually if they choose to leave or are willing to commit to participation in the rest of the workshop.
- Check out AmeriCorps (VISTA).
- Not enough participants for your Basic? Recruit some facilitators to expand the group, especially those who have recently completed a T4F.
- Get the money up front. ("Fees," sliding scale, cover a range from \$30 or \$40 to \$175, "no one turned away for inability to pay"). If someone can't pay, perhaps a "work exchange" can be offered...(purpose: to increase their commitment to attend).
- Nothing beats personal contact. Friends, students, counselors...groups who already respect you. Don't be afraid to tell them why they would make a good facilitator. Remember that most people are afraid of prisons, and those without prison experience who want to go in often have some private agenda...pay attention.
- Not enough participants for a conventional community Training for Facilitators? Someone from Minnesota reported that a local facilitator has devised a method of joining a small T4F with a conventional Basic. Others suggested incorporating a T4F candidate in a Basic along with their own

(See "Filling Workshops" on page 5)

(“New Zealand Offering” continued from page 4)

one pointed him out to me. He hadn’t seen me, but I followed him from up on the roof – my builders’ hammer and chisel in my hands, my anger building up inside my mind about what he had done to my sister. We were in a part of the compound that was just him, me and one of my friends. I was close enough to touch – or spear – him, and I called his name.

He stopped, looking up and trying to see who I was. I saw first recognition dawn in his eyes, then shock, eventually fear – he was trembling visibly – as he let my reputation sink in, knowing I was capable

of killing him.

For what seemed like many minutes we stood staring at each other, I had so many thoughts. The old me would have just jumped down and killed him, and those ideas were battling inside me. I thought of how killing him would only add more time – and that I could have got revenge for him hurting my sister. But I also thought of all I had achieved, my changes, the people who trusted me who I would let down – and I cried. I thought of what had happened just two days before, when a cousin of the man I had murdered suddenly told me that he forgave me for what I had

(See “New Zealand Offering” on page 6)

(“Filling Workshops” continued from page 4)

T4F facilitator to give them feedback and explanations during the breaks and meals, thus allowing the regular facilitators to give all their attention to the Basic participants.

P.S. – Here’s a list of reasons people take workshops one group inserts in its brochure:

- They want to be a factor in actively lessening violence in our community.
- They are actively working to deepen their personal relationships and their communication with loved ones.
- They survived childhood experiences of violence and want to stop handing it down to the next generation.
- They work with people who have issues of violence in their lives and they want to expand their knowledge and their techniques of dealing with it.
- They want to participate in facilitating nonviolence workshops in their communities, schools, and places of incarceration.
- They are dealing with personal issues of rage and violence—and with the loneliness, despair, and sense of isolation that can result.
- They are seeking more productive ways of expressing their needs and problems without blaming or alienating others.
- They want to work on themselves in an atmosphere of respect, support, and free choice.
- They recognize that all of us have elements of both great good and great violence within us, which affect our lives in subtle but profound ways, and they seek a clearer inner knowledge of these processes.

and more..... ☞

("New Zealand Offering" continued from page 5)

done...how could I accept his caring and yet so much wanted to hurt my cousin. I thought of all I would have lost, and I cried. I knew that if I'd got down off the roof, and taken one tiny step, I wouldn't be able to turn back, and would be sitting in Maximum Security prison right now. In those agonising moments, I realised that my journey with AVP and Christianity had changed me, because the old me would have said "bugger the consequences and just do it". But I'd thought before reacting – and turned away. I saw him go off into a building. I put down my hammer and chisel and sat for a moment, realising that the old me had died – it was an awesome realisation.

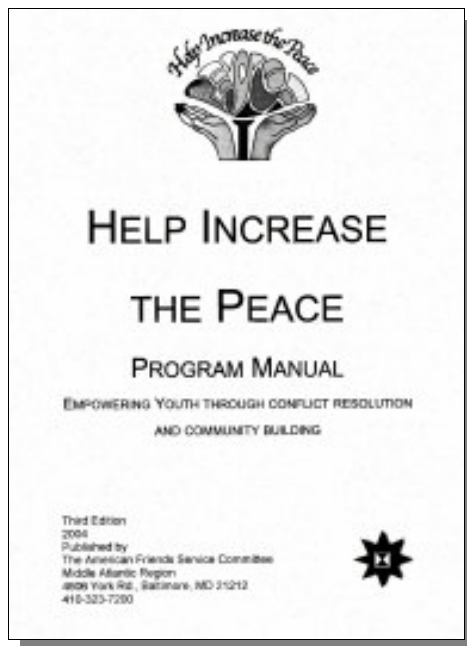
A few weeks later I was playing in the church band in the same unit, when I saw my cousin walk into the room. It freaked me out, because all the feelings started coming up inside me again. I told Padre – who said for me to bottle it up and control myself. But I couldn't, especially when I had to stand and sing a song called "Jesus Please Hear my Heart". So, I thought of an alternative...I stood up at the front of the church and poured my heart out to my cousin. I told him how much he had hurt me, how a part of me wanted to kill him for what he had done – I shared the way we do in AVP with the talking stick, to all the other inmates there too. I shared about AVP and my commitment to trying to find a non-violent way of sorting my desire for revenge out. People came up at the end of the Service and shook my hand – then I saw my cousin standing there – tears rolling down his cheeks. I took pity on him and we sat down together, introduced ourselves and talked man to man.

I found that sharing like that took my anger away, and my heart started to heal because I'd released the pain and anger in a positive way, where it had helped to heal

more than just myself. That, more than anything else, helped me realise that there are alternatives to violence, and those alternatives have to be lived and breathed, not just picked up now and again.

I know I can never undo the past, or bring back the life of the man I killed – but it has helped me find my humility, and a desire to be loving and giving. I know how precious and beautiful life is – and how great it feels to be able to share with – and care about others in a loving way. ☘

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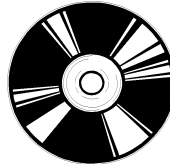
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Janet Riley for
scanning these for us

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On Page 15

BALLOON RELAY

Light & Lively

Eric Smith, Colorado

Materials:

A bag of balloons (1 balloon per participant), strips of masking tape to make a starting/finish line, one chair per team.

Make teams:

Divide people into teams of 5 to 8 people—however many it takes to have teams consisting of an equal number of participants. **Hint:** You'll probably end up with two or three teams unless your group is well over 20. Allow members of the facilitation team to participate to even up the number of participants on each team; to be fair, the number of people on each team should be the same.

Set up:

Line the teams up at one end of the room, facing the wall at the opposite end of the room. Put some masking tape on the floor in front of the group leader to serve as a starting line/ finish line for each group. Set up one chair per group at the far end of the room.

Have each participant blow up a balloon and tie it. Invite people to help each other out with the tying if anyone has difficulty. (Some participants think this is so fun, it is the exercise... but it isn't—just prep).

Play:

Have each participant (except the leader) put a balloon in front of them. Direct them to hold it in place by pressing their body toward the person on front of them.

At no time after the balloon has been set in place may anyone touch the balloon with their hands. They must keep tight as a group to hold the balloons in place.

When the referee says "go!", each team moves as quickly as it can to the far end of the room, goes around the chair, and returns past the finish line (starting line). The first group to cross the tape (every member in the group must cross) wins.

This L&L often takes a little practice; some groups like to try this several times; they usually get better at it the more they practice. ☘

A Poem Written by an Inmate at Albion Correctional Facility

Submitted by Caring Kathy Essek,

AVP Coordinator for Albion Correctional Facility, New York

Remembering where we came from
Escaping from that life
Crying cause we were scared
Overcoming all the strife
Victory is finally here
Eventually we'll get it right
Regaining our self dignity
Yea! Recovery is worth the fight

MANY THANKS TO THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE FOR PUTTING TOGETHER SUCH A WONDERFUL AND SUCCESSFUL EVENT! ALL WHO ATTENDED ENJOYED THE BENEFITS OF YOUR HARD WORK AND ATTENTION TO DETAIL! ☺

Kudos to the Conf. Committee
from Nancy Helfrich!

*AVP-USA Conference
2005 Attendees*

Errata: Terry Dobson, one of O'Sensei's students, who was influential in bringing Aikido to America, is the author of "The Aikido Story" published in Fall 2004 issue of the TRANSFORMER.—the Editor

ALWAYS REMEMBER THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY REGARDING NAMES AND PLACES

Ladies in Tennis Shoes Are SOLE Volunteers



Two great ladies, “Kind Kit” and “Eager Ev” Pilgrim have spent a decade as the sole community volunteers for the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) at Eastern Correctional Institution.

Over 10,000 prisoners have been housed at ECI this decade, and during that time, 2,000 prisoners have completed AVP only due to these amazing ladies, who have introduced and promoted AVP here despite innumerable obstacles.

Filling a niche at Eastern, “Kind Kit” and “Eager Ev” bring AVP to prisoners, showing them techniques that provide “win-win” solutions which generate loving respect and a sense of community. By debriefing role-plays, deconstructing the decision-making process, and analyzing

communication feedback, AVP shows prisoners how to use “Transforming Power” to change the outcome of possible conflict.

“Kind Kit” and “Eager Ev” have helped reduce inmate-on-officer, inmate-on-inmate, and parolee violence and recitivism, working with murderers, rapists, and others, by promoting ethics and values in a

valueless environment.



Editor’s Note: The above is adapted from a letter by inmate, Douglas Arey, who also nominated them for an award.

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2005

NOTICE

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the TRANSFORMER

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- Subscribers will be notified when their subscriptions have expired.
- A One Issue Grace Period applies, after which subscriber’s name will be removed from the Transformer Subscriptions Database.
- All New Facilitators are eligible for a FREE 1-Year Subscription upon receipt of a request by a local or regional group or council coordinator. Afterwards, a paid subscription is needed to continue receiving the Transformer. [Policy has been approved by the Communications Committee, June 2005]

SIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

Workshops Bridge the Gap

Alejo (Divine Dao'ud) Rodriguez, Eastern NY Correctional Facility

Our workshops at Eastern NY Correctional Facility are often faced with the challenge of meeting the needs of the hearing impaired. While most AVP workshops in other facilities are dealing with monolingual challenges of Spanish speaking participants, Eastern workshops are often interpreted through sign language. What started out as a desire to introduce the AVP philosophy to the disabled has turned out to be our introduction and education to American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf culture. Oddly enough, it has been the hearing impaired who have enhanced our workshops by calling our attention to aspects of how we communicate and how much we take for granted.

Eastern NY Correctional Facility is the central hub for the sensorial Disabled Unit (SDU), which houses hearing and visually impaired inmates. SDU was established in the early eighties and currently services the needs of approximately sixty inmates. Supervised by a team of civilian staff, with the assistance of inmates trained in sign language interpreting for the deaf and mobility training for the blind, SDU provides resources to help the disabled to function in the prison environment.

As a workshop, we first met the men of SDI around 1994. With the assistance of inmate interpreters and escorts we held our first SDI/AVP workshop. With a number of men from SDU expressing interest in attending a workshop we thought that it would be best to hold a separate workshop. For a number of years we followed the format of holding separate basic and advanced workshops. Until the time came when the waiting list dwindled down and the hearing impaired men, new to the facility, expressed their desire to learn about

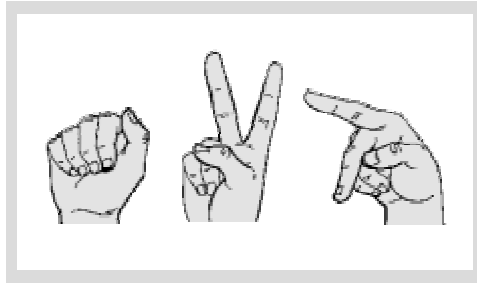
AVP. For the first time we were confronted with either putting these men off indefinitely until there would be more SDU participants available or include them in one of our regularly scheduled workshops. We came to the conclusion that it would be unfair to make the two men wait and decided to place them in our next basic workshop. However, it must be said, we had our share of reservations. No one knew what to expect, would the men of SDU feel comfortable with the others? What about the others, would they feel comfortable with the disabled? Would they genuinely be sensitive, have patience? Would the men of SDU feel left out in the process as they often do in other area of their lives? There were many questions in our heads, but we trusted in the AVP process and moved forward. To our surprise the weekend was a success. Clearly, all the questions leading to our worries, were just that, OUR worries.

That was a little over four years ago and since then we have not had another segregated SDU/AVP workshop. None of us could have predicted just how much the hearing impaired has enhanced our workshops. On a number of occasions those men have openly discussed their feelings when they are unable to communicate their feelings and how this frustration has led to feelings of resentment and anger. Without fail, these discussions would highlight the AVP philosophy on the significance of building good communication skills. Groups would respond by listening attentively, and though they were not deaf, often times the other participants were able to relate to the same cause of similar frustrations.

Inmate interpreters are always present to aid in communication. Yet there have been a number of times when the hearing impaired have conveyed a feeling so passionately the group as a whole knew what

(See "Sign Language Lessons" on page 11)

(*“Sign Language Lessons” continued from page 10*) was being said. Facial expressions are essential to ASL. These words are not signed they are expressed. Either through a facial expression or gestures, sign can be over-dramatized or minimized to convey intensity. And so much is conveyed through the showing of feelings as opposed to giving a word description. Which, unfortunately, has become an alien concept to the rest of us who have become so wordy that we end up relying on words to feel for us rather than putting feelings into our words. But maybe this is too much to ask. The world we live in teaches us that boys are not supposed to cry and toughness is the only acceptable feeling to express. The Deaf, on the other hand, are less inhibited



when it comes to showing their feelings and attitudes. For the hearing impaired paying attention is an active process, showing disappointment or hurt is not a weakness; it is strength.

Body language, as a whole, is something we all utilize and respond to and yet it is often dismissed as being a non-factor. In a recent Basic workshop, one hearing impaired man highlighted this point during an illustration of the “I MESSAGE” exercise. At the time the facilitator had asked for two volunteers to perform a small skit in which they would illustrate the steps in the “I MESSAGE”. The two men successfully verbalized the steps of the exercise, but when the skit was over, the two deaf men for whom I was interpreting, looked confused. One of them signed to me and said: “I understand the exercise and all the steps, but I think you signed it wrong.” When I asked him why he felt that way he told me that he didn’t know for sure if I signed

anything wrong, only that what I signed didn’t match the body language of the two people in the skit. I then conveyed this to the rest of the group and they all agreed. Once they stopped and began to analyze the skit the group not only acknowledged the contradiction, but most also noted that the “beef” between the two was not resolved. Thereafter, suggestions sprang up on body language gestures to accompany the “I MESSAGE”. This, too, generated an interesting discussion. Some in the group admitted that they had trouble confronting a situation or apologizing without

the hard body language exterior to mask their feelings.

The experience prompted an idea to create a new exercise to bring out the point of using effective body language.

To some extent body

language is reinforced in the “ATTENTIVE LISTENING” exercise. So as an advanced exercising aspects of the “I MESSAGE” and “ATTENTIVE LISTENING” could be fused together for a skit type exercise to be both fun and influential.

The goal of the Fusion skit exercise is to articulate the steps of the “I MESSAGE” and it would be up to groups of two to develop a brief skit. The group would perform the skit but they have to do so using negative expressive or receptive communication skills. A second group of two, after seeing the skit performed, would have to redo the skit but with positive expressive or receptive communication skills. Questions to ask: Can you remember a time when you utilized negative body language even though you were trying to convey a positive message? How did it feel to use positive body language? Note: This

(See *“Sign Language Lessons” on page 13*)

In Memoriam
Thomas Wayne Wright
June 19,1965 - May 18,2005

*Submitted by Chloe Giampaolo
Bowie, Maryland*

My first encounter with Tom was several years ago when he showed up for the Basic Training workshop in the Alternatives to Violence Project at the correctional facility MCI-J here in Maryland. In my opening statements, with inmates, I've always told them :

“ Your behavior at one time didn't match the good person inside you. I believe that that good person exists and I want to see him come out.” I remember Tom staring at me intently when I said this. During that first session, the men also worked on selecting an adjective name. Tom chose Tiny Tom but that would change before long.

I watched him carefully that first weekend, and what I saw was a quiet, shy, self-conscious young man whose self-esteem was practically non-existent. I couldn't be sure that he would even return for another workshop. But sure enough, he signed up for the Advanced Workshop, and much to my surprise, he even signed up to become a trainer in the third workshop.

Within a short time, I witnessed a miraculous change and you can imagine my delight when he announced that he was changing his adjective name. “From now on,” he said, “I want to be called Thriving Tom.” And indeed! He did thrive! I watched him develop into a masterful facilitator and I looked on with pride as he led the group exercises week after week; month after month. He was completely dedicated to the program, and became a mentor to so many other participants. In time, however, because of several factors, the AVP program was put on hold for a while and we all went our separate ways to pursue other projects.

Last summer I received word that Tom was to be released after having spent almost twenty years in prison. He was only 39 years old. Shortly after his release, we celebrated his freedom with a nice lunch at a well-known Baltimore restaurant. We discussed his plans and options. He was so fortunate to have a strong, loving family support system which would help him through the rough spots.

We would talk periodically on the phone and he would give me an update of how things were progressing for him. He had found work as a maintenance man at a motel and continued to live at home with his mother.

He and I had recently discussed doing another community workshop locally, and I know that if he had lived, he would have gone on to do some more outstanding work.

When I first got the call from Tom's sister informing me of his sudden death, I was immensely saddened and upset. Why is it that some of us are destined for longevity, living well into our 90's as did both my parents ~ while others are given such a short time on this earth? There is no real answer to this but I personally believe that when the Almighty determines that we have served our purpose, He calls us home.

Tom enriched my life in a very special way and I feel so blessed to have known him and to have worked side by side with him. He was a prime example of what AVP is all about. He is mourned not only by his family and friends but also by the inmates and correctional officers who knew him. Tom served his purpose well. ☘

(“*Sign Language Lessons*” from page 11)

should be an advanced exercise and monitored closely so things do not get out of hand. Also, participants can choose one or the other negative communication skills, i. e. the group can highlight defeating body language for their expressive skills, or poor receptive skills.

The above Fusion exercise is merely a suggestion. These may be a better exercise to illustrate the point of body language communication. More important is the lesson the hearing impaired have taught us about communicating. We all share similar frustrations when we are not feeling heard and it is more than a feeling of neglect. It often comes across as an aggressive insult and often internalizes itself as resentment and anger. ☹



Ethics for Protection of Prisoners Involved in Research

Authentic Ann Ward
Institutional Review Board Prisoner Advocate

Hi all.....I have recently been recruited to our University's Institutional Review Board as a prisoner advocate. At the same time, though not directly related, I received some communication through our Prison Society that the Institute of Medicine is reviewing issues related to research with prisoners. The website at the bottom of this page provides some background on the effort and also includes a list-serve for communication to discuss the issue with researchers and advocates across the country.

The Committee on Ethical Considerations for Revisions to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Regulations for Protection of Prisoners Involved in Research will examine whether the conclusions reached by the



National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research in 1976 remain appropriate today.

This examination will consider the impact of developments since that time in correctional systems and the societal perceptions of the balance between research burdens and potential benefits of research. More specifically, the committee will

- consider whether the ethical bases for research with prisoners differ from those for research with non-prisoners,
- develop an ethical framework for the conduct of research with prisoners,
- based on the ethical framework developed, identify considerations or safeguards necessary to ensure that research with prisoners is conducted ethically, and
- identify issues and needs for future consideration and study. ☹

Web Site: “*Ethical Considerations for Revisions to the DHHS Regulations for Protection of Prisoners Involved in Research*” <http://www.iom.edu/project.asp?id=24594>

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Signing on to the AVP-L list

Peter Hoover (Persistent Peter)
Trumansburg, New York, USA

AVP-L@CORNELLE.EDU is a discussion list open to certified trainers of creative conflict-resolution workshops held under the auspices of the Alternatives to Violence Project, Inc., or its approved national (U.S.) or international equivalents. It is designed to facilitate communication among these individuals, with discussions to center around facilitation techniques, workshop exercises, and other useful information pertaining to the mechanics of facilitating AVP workshops. To preserve the confidentiality of workshop participants, please make comments about such individuals generic.

To subscribe, send an e-mail message indicating where and when you obtained your AVP facilitator certification, where you currently train, and any other pertinent information you care to include to the list owner, Peter Hoover, at prh4@cornell.edu.

Signing on to the AVP-L2 list

Richard Krouskop (Rambunctious Rick)
Shreveport, Louisiana, USA

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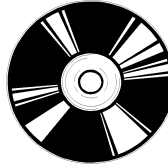
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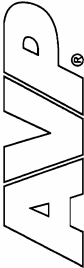
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