



The

TRANSFORMER

Supporting and Celebrating the Facilitators of AVP Workshops

National Gathering Issue

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The satisfaction of editing *The Transformer*

By Pat Hardy, Editorial Coordinator, AVP-USA quarterly newsletter for facilitators

Over my life I have had the pleasure of taking on some great volunteer positions. Certainly being a facilitator is one that is hard to beat and starting AVP-California with a great group of facilitators has been a treasure, but editing and doing some writing for *The Transformer* has had some very special benefits and joys.

First, I should let you know that after the Spring issue of this newsletter, someone else will have this joy. Seven years has been plenty for me. Working with Ed Sabin on the team has been a relief; he has been a true partner in coordinating this newsletter.

That said, let me tell you how great this position is...

Where else would you be able to take the fantastic experience as an AVP facilitator and share with your peers new ideas for exercises, new approaches to familiar issues such as working with staff or resolving issues in one's council?

Most of these ideas come from other people. In some cases, they come from inside facilitators at a prison who write entire issues. All we do is figure out which goes first and how they relate to one another in the issue. Jessup



Correctional Institution in Maryland will be writing their fourth issue in Summer 2015.

In other cases, we have complete issues relating to new products, such as the *Facilitators Training Manual*, where I get to write the front-page editorial and easily say great things about these new products and their producers.

Sometimes I get on my high horse and write an editorial that makes people think, hopefully.

The great thing is rarely do I need to write much of the 12-page publication because so many people send in an article here and there or groups commit to writing a whole issue a couple times a year.

Over the years we have built a loyal team who produces the newsletter and who have made it easier and a real pleasure to work with. At the beginning of the year, I take last year's Editorial Calendar and set the dates by when all the work should be done and circulate it to the others on the team to check their lives against it, dodging vacations, birthdays, anniversaries, etc. Eventually we get a final



Continued on page 2

The TRANSFORMER

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Continued from page 1

The satisfaction...

calendar from which we give people the dates to submit articles.

After gathering and receiving the copy, Ed Sabin and I go over it and make decisions about specific articles and their order. He does a fine job of cutting overly long articles to make them more concise and less laborious to read. He also distills the issues that come over the AVP-L to make them easier to read and still captures the ideas.

After selecting which articles work this quarter and deciding on the focus of the newsletter, we send it off to our proofer, Joan Cowan, who is speedy, gives helpful input and also straightens up our "woids." I am sort of a slap-dash writer, so she fixes the articles I write with thoughtful thoroughness. I love it.

Then the bits and pieces come back to me. Ed and I decide on the final order which we give to our dream of a graphic designer, Peggy Hellem. I have worked with multiple graphic designers in my life, and Peggy is one of the easiest to work with. She never complains when I send back the third revised draft; just LOLs me with her friendly joking and

makes the changes cheerfully, even when it is my error.

The amazing thing about this "job" is I don't need to stress over deadlines because no one notices when it arrives. In seven years, I have yet to have a subscriber email me that he has not received his newsletter. Of course, we still try to keep on schedule so we don't throw off the printer's schedule or have to wait for someone to come back from vacation.

The one person who has asked about its arrival is Rick Krouskop, who handles the database of subscribers as well as the printing and mailing of the newsletter by snail mail or email. He is always ready and handles this detail with good cheer and competency.

Because of this great team of people, I hope someone reading this gets inspired to enjoy the satisfaction involved in being part of the Editorial Team for *The Transformer*.

Contact me, Pat, at 805/886-9773 within the next month so you can join me as I put to bed the last issue I will do.



AVP

Do you have an *Organizing Kit*?

AVPUSA offers a free download (or you can order your own handy, beautifully bound copy) of the *Organizing Kit* which includes a whole chapter on recruitment including an appendix item on Diversity. Go to www.avpusa.org Look for "Want to start your own AVP?"

If your group or region is interested in becoming rejuvenated write an issue for *The Transformer*, contact
Editorial Coordinator,

P.O. Box 3294,
Santa Barbara, CA 93130 editor@avpusa.org



Waiting for the workshop to start....

How often is it that in a prison workshop we have to wait for every prisoner to be released before we start? My mom used to have a call she liked to do when she knew the group and the meeting or play was not starting. She would start singing, "Here we sit like birds in the wilderness, birds in the wilderness, birds in the wilderness, waiting for the show to start." You probably don't want that to happen. However, sometimes it feels very uncomfortable for participants to stand or sit around and stare at one another; so, here are some ideas for the time they are arriving, which can start the workshop interaction before the workshop starts, either for the weekend or each day.

Of course, greeting everyone and shaking their hands as they arrive is a good starter if your team has completed their prep work. Asking questions (such as, where are you from, how's your day going?) can help relax you and the arriving inmates, but there are a few more ways you can increase comfort right away.

All too often the team has not completed their planning, and they are not ready to be present for the arriving participants. Here is a good idea that can be used in different formats for different workshops and times of day.

A few requirements make it work best:

It should be an inclusive game, not an elimination one, since that sets a negative tone.

Participants need to be able to step in whenever they enter the room.

A team member (or a participant) is asked to explain the game as people are arriving.

And of course, fun.

1. Find Someone Who/People Hunt: (see page 4) Ask an early arriver to pass out the sheets as the others come in and get them started with the exercise. This arrival exercise can be adjusted for community groups, for different sections of an Advanced Workshop where the group is encouraged to spend some time asking more questions, for a conference or even at a party. Just change the descriptions for the audience. When you know the group, consider putting categories like: "just got engaged," "has a pickup truck," "has been in a gang," "has sung on a stage to more than 100 people," "is an artist." This also can be found with another series of questions in Scavenger Hunt in the *HIPP Manual*, page 231).

2. Cultural Pursuit (see *HIPP Manual*, page 229) is another form of the one above and great for pre-starting time in an Advanced Workshop.

3. Human Bingo is another word for it! It becomes a contest then (with which I am not comfortable), and the sheet is organized in a Bingo-like format with similar words and a similar method of filling the spaces.

4. Bumper Sticker: (Advanced Manual D-24) Fold and cut 8.5x11-inch sheets of paper in half lengthwise and pass out as they arrive, asking them to create a bumper sticker that says something about the theme of the Advanced Workshop or design one that reflects the Guide to Transforming Power that speaks to you today.

5. Counting: You need one team member available to do this one. The point of this is to randomly count as far as you can as a group without duplicating the number. Start by calling out "one" and wait for someone else to call out "2." When two people call the same number, the group starts over with 1. You keep doing this until you are ready to start the workshop or you get a sense you cannot go any higher and their interest is lost. Hopefully, the former occurs first.

6. Here I sit (G-10 Advanced Manual)

7. Songs are also a good way to start off on the second or third day.

Do you have some ways you handle this starting-off discomfort? Send your ideas to avppat@gmail.com or P.O. Box 3294, Santa Barbara, CA 93130.



FIND SOMEONE WHO....

Instructions: Get up and go around the room and ask different people if one of these categories fit them. Write that person's name on the line next to the category.

Try to get as many as you can, but only use each person's name once.



Owns or has owned a pet _____

Is left-handed _____

Is the oldest or youngest in the family _____

Is an aunt or an uncle _____

Plays three sports _____

Participated in a club at school _____

Gives good advice to friends _____

Got into an argument recently _____

Has traveled to other countries _____

Speaks more than one language _____

Thinks that racism can be eliminated _____

Has a big family _____

Likes to cook _____

Believes that what goes around comes around _____

Goes to church, synagogue, mosque, Meetinghouse _____

Hates being teased _____

Can play a musical instrument _____

Is a night person _____

Internet Discussions on the AVP-L Who Signs Certificates at Your Institution?

The Massachusetts DOC has been thinking that for many years someone from each facility has been signing our certificates. I have spoken with them and assured them that is not the case and it is not OK with us. They are doing some more thinking about it, and we are building our case. An important point is that it is a national policy to establish that AVP is an independent program. Could you reply and/or pass me along to the correct person/committee?

Nancy Shippen and Chris Campbell

Can you be more specific? Who is the "someone" from each facility? A DOC staff person or an inside facilitator? In Minnesota, the lead facilitator of the workshop signs certificates. They are usually different for each workshop and for each facility.

Terry Kayser

Sorry, I wasn't clear. When Fox News got hold of one of our certificates signed by the most notorious man incarcerated in Massachusetts, the DOC scrambled to learn more about AVP but stood behind the program. They did, however, insist we stop having facilitators sign the certificates. That's another story. They have been thinking that an administrator has been signing ever since.

Nancy Shippen

Absolutely not. We would not consider having the institution sign the certificates. We lose our independence when that happens. Then the participants would look at the program as being sponsored by the institution, and our volunteer status might come into question. I see this as similar to staff sitting in on sessions. When the new Deputy Warden ordered staff to sit in on the sessions, we stopped the program completely

until he changed his mind and no longer required staff to sit in. It is that important. Our independence is core to our effectiveness and our principles.

Further, if they are responding to FOX Entertainment News (which is reason enough to disregard it) because a "bad person" was involved in AVP, someone who should be punished until his/her death, acquiescing to this pressure flies in the face of all that we stand for. For me, the prison either wants the program or not. AVP is our program, and we run it according to our principles and not the institution's. Institutions fear responses of outside influences which have no interest in the rehabilitation of those we serve.

John Shuford

In Idaho, the certificates are printed by the Chaplain's office in a standard Religious Services format and a perfunctory Chaplain signature heads the signature line, but there is room and expectation that the facilitation team present on the last session signs each certificate. Idaho Corrections did not want AVP to be manufacturing its own certificates and has that process done internally to control and oversee certificate standards and records.

Ethen Perkins

An absolute no-no. Part of what gives us our credibility is that we are independent of DOC. Certificates are signed not by people who put participants' names on a list but by people who witnessed their participation in the workshop. (Next they'll want to come in and do that, too.) Their job is to maintain security, make sure everything that happens in the prison (workshop and otherwise) is safe, do security checks on outsiders, etc. Our job is to provide content and validate our

own process by signing certificates. It's our program, not theirs.

Valentine Doyle

It's probably important to find out why they want to sign the certificates. We give copies of our certificates to some of our institutions as it helps them with their documentation, but in others we just give them a list of the folks who have completed the workshops. In both cases, the institution has its own documentation that goes into the inmates' files.

The certificates are good for the participants, and we ask the participants to try and hang on to them; but the documentation that they really need is the chrono issued by the institution. It's the chrono that will determine they have completed requirements towards any benefits that will come to them. If the institution wants to issue their own documents, they should be able to do it; but, for the reasons that Valentine states, the AVP certificates get issued by AVP.

Barbara Babin

To follow on Barbara's point, where I facilitate the prison issues certificates (I wish they didn't, but that's how it was when I got there) with the participant's name and the date, but no signatures--a colored original and two xeroxes. The participants get the original and one of the xeroxes (to send to their families or whatever), and both are signed by the whole team. The other xerox goes in the participant's permanent file, and they only want the outside facilitators to sign that one, wouldn't you know? So that does keep the record for the participant, but the ownership stays with us.

Valentine Doyle

Listening and Affirming "enemies"

LARA.

by Carol Towarnicky

For me, "Heeding God's Call" felt like just that, a call—except that it came by email. The invitation from Rabbi Phyllis Berman to be a Jewish observer/participant at the peace gathering had come only



a few weeks after I had returned from a human rights trip to Israel with 40 other people from the United States, most of them Jews. Now I and three other members of my synagogue, Mishkan Shalom in Philadelphia, were struggling to discern how to share what we had learned.

Listen.

The title of the workshop jumped out at me: *How can I Engage the "Other" in Public Dialog Without Perpetuating Violence?* This was something I craved to know. Like many people, I have several "others" in my life, although most are not personal acquaintances. As a newspaper editorial writer and columnist by trade, I'm used to having a forum to express my opinions—at length, without interruption. Debate, when it comes, comes later and in written form, and rarely develops into dialogue.

Yet much of what one of my editors calls "fan mail," reveals the



"others" out there: Those who dismiss evolution as "just a theory," who insist that the Bible condemns the "choice" of homosexuality, who believe that the Muslim religion is the source of something called "Islamofascism," that torture can be moral or necessary,

that climate change is a hoax, that there is a war against Christmas, that the poor are lazy, that guns don't kill people.

Listen.

I was mildly disappointed when Bonnie Tinker, the founder of Oregon-based Love Makes a Family (www.LMFamily.org), revealed that the first step of the process she developed to talk to the "other" is . . . Listen. Bonnie, who co-led the workshop with Rica Clinton, also of Oregon, created a process she calls LARA in 1992 to help people defend against an anti-LGBT initiative in her state. I



could only imagine how such a task could cut deeply to questions of identity and vulnerability, and the desire to either rage or run.

Shouldn't it demand something more powerful than Listen?

Then, though,

Bonnie revealed the second step—Affirm—and something clicked into place. What Bonnie and Rica were prescribing was a listening geared to finding something with which you agree in what your antagonist has said, some connection between you and the "other," which of course requires that you believe there is one to find.

There are four steps to LARA—Listen, Affirm, Respond, and Add—and they're all important, but I was still focused on the Listen and Affirm—actually, Listen to Affirm. Did I ever listen that way?

As Bonnie explained, engaging the other requires that you show respect for the humanity of the person you are speaking to. "The moral ground you are standing on is big enough for all," she says. "If you take up all of the moral ground by backing others into a corner, by forcing them up against the

wall or pushing them over the edge of a verbal precipice, they cannot join you in your opinion.

"Building common ground assumes that people share at least one value in common—the desire to do the right thing."

Listen.

Listen-Sh'ma 111 Hebrew—is the first word of the central prayer in Judaism. Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheynu Adonai Echad, "Listen (or hear) O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one."



Jews say the Sh'ma, exhorting themselves to "listen," several times a day, to listen and really hear the message that everything and everybody is one. That brand of listening, the kind in which you're listening for a connection, for a shared experience or goal, is difficult, but just the attempt feels transformative.

There's a Hebrew word for it—Rachmanus, which is sometimes translated as "compassion"—a call to attribute to everyone the best of intentions.

In the weeks since the workshop, I have struggled to listen in this deep way, to remember the phrases Bonnie Tinker offered to get us started. "I also care about ..." "I agree with you that..." "I think you are right about..."

I even tried it with old "fan mail," looking for something in the messages I could affirm, and often finding them—and glimpsing the possibility that, in reality, there is no true "other".

Carol Towarnicky is a member of the editorial board of the Philadelphia Daily News and a member of Mishkan Shalom, an activist Reconstructionist Jewish synagogue.

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The 2015 AVP-USA National Gathering

May 22-25, 2015

Tacoma, Washington



40 YEARS: Looking Back, Moving Ahead



In ancient **Roman** religion and **mythology**, **Janus** is the **god** of beginnings and transitions. He is usually a two-faced **god** since he looks to the future and the past.

COME CELEBRATE 40 YEARS OF AVP!

Celebrate our 40th year of bringing Transforming Power, peace and nonviolence into the lives of people around the world. AVP has been in 135 U.S. prisons and in schools, refugee camps, veterans programs, gang intervention work and conflict zones in over 60 countries. Come celebrate these successes and share in the wisdom gathered through the organization's 40 years of service and help us prepare to meet the challenges of the future.

Come to the great Northwest! With views of snow-covered, 14,000-foot Mount Rainer, the Olympic Mountains, Cascade Mountains and Puget Sound. If you come early or stay after, you can enjoy several national parks and the metropolitan pleasures of Seattle as well as whale watching, cruising or kayaking on Puget Sound.



CALL FOR PROPOSALS:

The local conference committee welcomes proposals for workshops, panels, demonstrations, presentations or other activities to enrich the Gathering Experience. See the form on page 9.

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Campus information is at:
University of Puget Sound
1500 N. Warner St.
Tacoma, WA 98416.

Campus visitor information can be found at:
<http://www.pugetsound.edu/about/offices-services/conference-services/for-visitors>

Your choices: single, double or multiple occupancy. Linens included. Meals starting Friday night through Sunday breakfast and all programs are included also. Please indicate roommate preferences. Number of singles is limited.

LOCATION:

University of Puget Sound,
1500 N. Warner St.
Tacoma, WA 98416.
Just 30 minutes from the
Seattle-Tacoma Airport.

REGISTRATION:

Register online at
www.avpusaconference.org
by March 20 at the reduced
early bird rate!
Email registrar@avpusa.org if
you need help registering.
(Be sure to give your phone
number so he can call you.)

Looking for a few (dozen, hundred, thousand?) good facilitators...

It's that time of year!

Planning is underway for the 2015 AVP-USA Annual National Conference, and we need YOU to help make it great! Since your insights and experiences are the heart of an AVP national gathering, please consider sharing your ideas with others and facilitate a workshop or dialog at the conference.

Submission Of Proposals/Ideas:

Email: info@projectsforacivilsociety.org
or call 206-856-4444 to brainstorm ideas. Or, fill out the Proposal form below and email or snail mail it to:
Roger Kluck
8023 10th Ave. NW
Seattle, WA 98117

DEADLINE for IDEAS: February 1, 2015

We want to list your workshop in the registration materials, which will be sent out early February to entice people to come to the AVP-USA Conference this year.

PROPOSAL/IDEA FORMAT

☐ I have a specific idea for a workshop. My topic: _____

☐ I would like to talk with someone about an idea. _____

☐ I would like to facilitate a 45-minute Issues and Answers dialog on: _____

Contact person's phone, email and snail mail address, please: _____

Team members: _____

NOTE: Please address inquiries regarding the gathering's keynote programs and committee meetings to:

Roger Kluck / AVP-Seattle

info@projectsforacivilsociety.org

Mailing address: Roger Kluck
8023 10th Ave. NW
Seattle, WA 98117

WHAT:

Create a 75- or 90-minute experiential workshop to be offered by your team of facilitators for other facilitators at the AVP-USA Annual National Conference.

WHEN:

Memorial Day weekend, May 23-26, 2015

WHERE:

University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA

WHO:

Any facilitator planning to attend the conference is invited to submit a proposal or team up with others. A good way to start is to put out a call for team members on the AVP-L email list around a subject you want to explore or recruit folks from your region to be part of your team.

HOW:

It's a good idea to make your breakout sessions interactive, like an AVP workshop, and to facilitate in teams using the AVP model. Explore your greatest challenges and triumphs in AVP. Share creative ideas and new exercises. Or consider a session that relates to the theme for this year: "40 Years: Looking Back-Moving Ahead." We are happy to work with you on developing participatory methods.

Call for Art

To help celebrate AVP's 40th anniversary, the Committee of Committees is issuing a call for art. We seek images that depict the message of AVP and how people have been affected by taking AVP workshops. Selected pieces are to be used on the Annual Conference announcements, including the program cover, and other promotional material. Full credit will be given to each artist.

Art pieces are limited to 8-1/2 by 11 inches but can be any medium--pencil, watercolor, crayon, ink, etc.

Submissions become the property of AVP-USA for use in publications and products or on the AVP-USA website. In addition, ALL ART SUBMITTED WILL BE DISPLAYED AND HONORED AT THE 2015 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF AVP.

Deadline for artwork is March 1, 2015.

Mail to AVP-USA, Inc., 1050 Selby Ave., Saint Paul, MN 55104. Please include the artist's name and address.

All entries will receive a free issue of *The Transformer*, and the artist with artwork selected for the 40th anniversary will be offered a free item from the Distribution Center publication list.

What's in a Name?

By Lighthouse Larry Bratt

I gave myself the task of compiling past and current issues of *The Transformer* so that my fellow facilitators could read, review and cull exercises for workshops. Whenever a new facilitator takes the catalog and reads this tremendously helpful compendium, they always return it with an enthusiastic, "Thank you. I found some exciting exercises."

Transformer exercises such as Let's Take a Walk, Magic Carpet, Exploring our Values, Moving Van and others have proven to be huge hits with participants. Every issue is a learning tool and I, too, find myself rereading articles. One such article from the 2013 Spring issue by Present Pat, *What does your adjective name say?*, briefly shared the history of adjective names.

Pat also shared her feelings with me on adjective names through collaborative correspondence as I edited the 2012 and 2013 Summer issues of *The Transformer* that Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI) wrote. JCI also did the 2014 Summer copy, and we will do the 2015 issue as well.

Although Pat's reasoning was sound, I ignored her counsel to change my name. That is until I reread the essay. Afterward, through contemplation, Pat's logic guided me to change my name of 19 years from Bodacious Bratt to Lighthouse Larry.

I recognized my years of helping and guiding AVP participants and facilitators wasn't so bold as it was being a light. Thus Lighthouse, a steady structure in stormy waters to help guide distressed souls, suited the person I have become.

It behooves everyone to occasionally reread past issues of *The Transformer*. You will be surprised what you can learn... about yourself.

POSITIVE CHANGES

AVP has changed my life
No more chaos, violence and strife.

I try to look at others in a positive way
To experience new growth every day.

Thinking before reacting is hard to do
So I take a deep breath and realize you're human, too.

Thank God, I am no longer the man I used to be
This is just the tip of the iceberg of what AVP has done for me.

So I challenge you to expect the best
'Cause with AVP you can put conflicts to rest.

I hope all your goals and dreams come true
Wherever you go, take AVP with you!

Jubilant Jose Rodriguez
Nebraska State Penitentiary

Listen, LISTEN

When you listen, you affirm me
 but your listening must be real
 sensitive and serious
 not looking busily around
 not with a worried or distracted frown
 not preparing what you are going to say next
 but giving me your full attention.

You are telling me I am a person of value
 important and worth listening to
 one with whom you will share yourself.

I have ideas to share
 feelings which I too often keep to myself
 deep questions which struggle inside me for answers
 I have hopes only tentatively acknowledged
 which are not easy to share
 and pain and guilt and fear I try to stifle.

These are sensitive areas and a real part of me
 but it takes courage to confide in another.

I need to listen, too, if we are to become close
 How can i tell you I understand?
 I can show interest with my eyes or an occasional word
 attuned to pick up not only spoken words
 but also the glimmer of a smile
 a look of pain, the hesitation, the struggle
 which may suggest something as yet too deep for words.

So, let us take time together
 respecting the other's freedom
 encouraging without hurrying
 understanding that some things may never be brought to light
 but others may emerge if given time.

Each through this listening enriches the other
 with the priceless gift of intimacy.
by Keith Pearson, Melbourne, Australia

Will you please just *listen*?

When I ask you to listen and you start giving advice, you have not done what I have asked.
 When I ask you to listen and you start telling me why I shouldn't feel the way I do, you are invalidating my feelings.
 When I ask you to listen and you start trying to solve my problem, I feel underestimated and disempowered.
 When I ask you to listen and you start telling me what I need to do, I feel offended, pressured and controlled.
 When I ask you to listen, it does not mean I am helpless. I may be faltering, depressed or discouraged; but I am not helpless.
 When I ask you to listen and you do things which I can and need to do for myself, you hurt my self-esteem.
 But when you accept the way I feel, then I don't need to spend time and energy trying to defend myself or convince you, and
 I can focus on figuring out why I feel the way I feel and what to do about it.
 And when I do that, I don't need advice--just support, trust and encouragement.
 Please remember that what you think are "irrational feelings" always make sense if you take time to listen and understand me.
Quote by Keith Pearson



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