

## Celebrating 40 Years of AVP

### In This Issue

Early AVP History Honoring 40th Anniversary .....	1
New Transformer Co-Editor: elżbieta putrycz ....	2
40 years ago... The First AVP Agenda .....	3
Trust the Process.....	3
Let's Talk about Paying Facilitators .....	4
The Dollar Store Line and AVP .....	5
AVP Public Meeting Gets Media Coverage .....	5
Advanced Training for Facilitators .....	6
Taking another look at the FTM .....	6
AVP and Politics .....	6
Order Form .....	7
Letters from Inside Calipatria State Prison .....	8
Value of Broken Squares .....	9
Conference Info .....	10
AVP Public Meeting Gets Media Coverage in Springfield, Massachusetts ..	11
Selma .....	11

## Early AVP History in Honor of Our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

During the 1960s, when this country was in turmoil over civil rights, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and others led many in demonstrations, sit-ins, Freedom Rides and other events to draw attention to segregation, the lack of voting rights and other civil rights for Black members of our society. In spite of the resolve of participants to be nonviolent, violence and the potential for violence was widespread. Many Quakers felt called to help in these demonstrations to further nonviolence and bring equality to all people.

After the Attica Prison confrontations, a group of men serving long sentences formed a "Think Tank" at Green Haven Prison to work with New York City youth gangs and delinquent youth in custody. Their goal was to help the youth to break out of a psychology of violence to benefit both themselves and the communities to which they would return.

The chaplain at Green Haven was Rev. Edwin Muller, a unique individual with a creative mind. He encouraged the members of the Think Tank to develop programs to bring about changes such as better prison conditions in a non-violent manner instead of through rebellion or riot, such as had occurred at Attica Prison. Some leaders at Attica were subsequently transferred to Green Haven Prison.

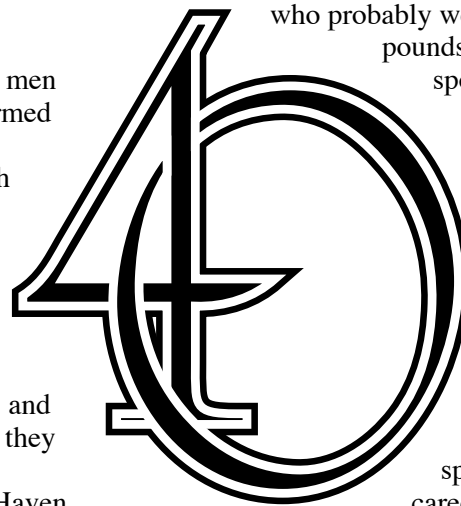
The Think Tank turned for help to Larry Apsey, Lee Stern and the Quaker

Project on Community Conflict, the Movement for a New Society, Children's Creative Response to Conflict and Fay Honey Knopp, who had worked with Bernard Lafayette in the Chicago office of the American Friends Service Committee.

Bernard Lafayette had been on Martin Luther King's team teaching nonviolence. He was eager to come to Green Haven to develop a workshop for people in prison. Larry Apsey, generally regarded as the founder of AVP, was a slight person about five foot five who probably weighed about 130 pounds. Gentle and soft

spoken, he was a long-time Quaker and spiritual person. He had been active in the Course of Miracles and from there picked up the concept of Transforming Power. Larry spent his business career as a successful

corporate lawyer at Celanese Corporation. In the '60s, Larry did legal work in the South, getting civil rights workers out of jail. In the '60s and early '70s, he became a leader of the Quaker Project on Community Conflict (QPCC), along with Lee Stern. QPCC trained civil rights workers in nonviolent methods and did workshops for police departments and others.



## The TRANSFORMER

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*Continued from page 1*

### 40th Anniversary...

The planning of the first workshop was difficult due to the number of trainers involved. The second workshop had a smaller group of trainers but was difficult due to the many strong personalities with differing experiences and agendas. In any case, they worked it out. The first workshops were three 12-hour days, with hour breaks for lunch and supper. Workshops were held in a school classroom, with the teacher's desk at the front and rows of chairs for the participants. A prison guard sat in the back.

The founding guidelines were cooperation, communication, affirmation and nonviolent conflict resolution. The most powerful exercise at the beginning of the workshop was the Affirmation Exercise. Until then, participants never had been asked to focus on the good in themselves. It created much discussion. It contradicted the basic message of the prison system: people in prison deserve no respect; they are useless, violent—even evil.

AVP incorporated the basic skill of affirmation. The first technique taught to affirm a participant was to address a participant by her/his first name, preceded by an adjective connoting a positive attribute, with an alliterative first letter, such as "Likeable Lee," "Laughing Larry" and "Smiling Steve."

The first workshop was on March 23, 24, & 25, 1975, at Green Haven Prison in Stormville, NY. On the leadership team were Bernard Lafayette, Larry Apsey, Pris Prutzman, Peter Woodrow, Susan Terry, Christopher Moore and Steve Stalonas. Participants were Eddie Ellis, Roger Namu Whitfield, Andrew Johnson (AKA Wallace Mabry), Charles Gale, Elbert Glanton, Jay Poblner, James Hughes, Gerald Jennings and Edward Dowdy. At first, workshops were called "Training in Nonviolence."

For many years, AVP was a project of the Peace and Social Action Program of New York Yearly Meeting. Other Quakers became interested in participating in this new project, including Janet Lugo and Ellen Flanders. They had been participating

in the Quaker Worship Group at Auburn Prison and were able to get the new workshops started there. From there, the spark spread to other prisons in New York State and from there, to many other places.

The AVP History Committee is asking AVPers to write up the history of how AVP got started in their state or country, recording as many names and dates as possible. By doing so, we'll have a clearer picture of how AVP spread to other states and countries. Many have asked about the origins of the currently used exercises and activities.

Send your recollections to Mama Marge, c/o AVPUSA History project, 1050 Selby Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

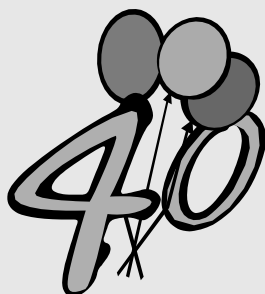
### New Transformer Co-Editor: elżbieta putrycz

I first met AVP in 6th grade. We were introduced by Heartbroken Chris and Parallel Construction. With joy and the taste of Transforming Power, those basic experiences seduced me. By high school, I had fallen in love. Now, years later, I facilitate AVP in Schools and serve on the AVP/USA Youth Committee. Summer 2015 will be my first issue as editor of the Transformer. Please write to me, I want to get to know y'all. Share your articles, ideas, letters, images, hopes, and dreams . . . feel free to write in your own language. peace, escrita elżbieta [avptransformer@gmail.com](mailto:avptransformer@gmail.com)



## 40 years ago... The First AVP Agenda

Gatherings: CCRC always started each session with one, which included a review of the agenda for that session. The first few workshops started with a few minutes of silence.



Adjective

Name Game: from CCRC, possibly also from MNS

What Is Violence: from Bernard Lafayette

Listening Skills: from CCRC and Parent Effectiveness

Affirmation Exercise: from CCRC and MNS, adapted from Reevaluation Counseling

Concentric Circles: from Steve Stalones

Sharing: A Conflict I Resolved

Nonviolently: probably from Bernard Lafayette

"I" Messages: from Parent/Teacher Effectiveness Training

Hassle Lines: a traditional, generic nonviolence training tool used by many groups

Transforming Power: from Larry Apsey and the Course in Miracles

Broken Squares: traditional nonviolence training tool

Quick Decisions: from CCRC

Role Plays: traditional nonviolence training tool

Light & Liveliess: traditional nonviolence training tool

Closings for each session: from CCRC

## Trust the Process!

At the heart of AVP are faith and hope. It's about getting up in the morning, looking in the mirror and respecting what you see. It's not about vanity; it's about values and conviction and living with a sense of purpose as part of a community--part of the earth, the universe.

"People are looking for something that will make a difference in a world where violence seems to be all around." Kathy Rubenstein (from a recent AVP workshop she organized in Springfield, Mass.: <http://wwwlp.com/2015/01/17/frustrated-with-violence-springfield-residents-strive-for-peace-through-avp/> )

To create a more just, non-violent and humane common future, we begin by acknowledging our shared vulnerabilities. This type of "self-disclosure" is essential to any AVP workshop. It is fundamental to building trust or any sense of community. Most people are too caught up in day-to-day life functions to "get involved" with community causes. Most feel lucky to find a few spare hours to spend on leisurely pursuits. It is hard for many to imagine how they might make room for community causes or public commitments. Life stress is real, and we often spend most of our leisure time

trying to recuperate from it.

So, how do we strike that balance in our lives between those demands and things that nurture? How do we step past our own needs and gain perspective about how what we do impacts the community we live in?

An "inside facilitator" recently sent me this encouraging message, "God has given you the will and strength to assist others who are in need of your enduring love and devotion to making our lives meaningful, with purpose. Your insights and

love for others have motivated many of us to seek a higher plane of awareness and existence--no longer to feel we have no purpose--and to step up and be accountable for our actions while at the same time sharing with others our experiences and hopes! Yes, hopes!"

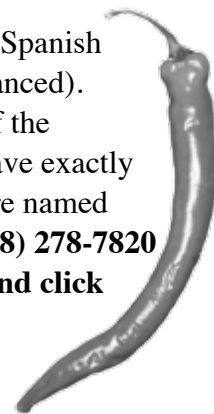
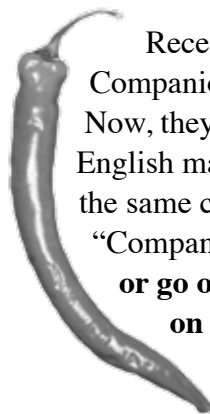
That means learning to draw pleasure and passion for the real work that needs doing in this life. It means refusing to let the stressors get in the way of living a meaning-filled life. That is the heart of the AVP process for me.

*Diligent Dawn*



## New Spanish Companion Manuals

Recently completed are two new "Spanish Companion" Manuals (Basic and Advanced). Now, they are direct Spanish mirrors of the English manuals. Page-by-page they have exactly the same content. That is why they were named "Companion." To order yours, call (888) 278-7820 or go online to: [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org) and click on Manuals.



## Let's Talk about Paying Facilitators

In the United States, much conversation occurs around diversity (or the lack thereof) in AVP. Would being able to pay facilitators help increase diversity?

**The AVP-USA Bylaws and Policies state that prison facilitators are not paid for their work. However,** AVP may reimburse expenses incurred in conducting a workshop. Local groups may decide whether or not to pay facilitators a stipend for conducting community workshops. What are some reasons why someone might be paid to facilitate a workshop?

1. The person has a low-paying job that does not provide any vacation time, and he/she cannot afford to take time off from work.
2. The person is a mother with small children and cannot afford childcare on a weekend.
3. The person is just out of prison and has not found a job yet.
4. The person is the son or daughter of an elderly woman for whom they are the primary caregiver.
5. The person lost a job and doesn't feel secure enough that he/she will get one soon.

**Talking about money is uncomfortable for Americans.** But unless you talk about money first and are specific regarding what is available, you ask a potential facilitator either to face the embarrassment of bringing it up or learn that he/she cannot facilitate due to a lack of funds.

Assuming that funds are available, your local council can set up parameters for payment. Though we want to preserve an "all-volunteer" group of facilitators, to expand the diversity of AVP we need to consider economic differences and be open to the possibility of lost income

replacement; for example, meeting child care costs as a necessity. Money for facilitators can come from local grants, from charging for workshops and by saving former participant names and sending out an appeal letter. In California we paid cash to youth who were on the verge of jumping into gangs. To keep track of the money, we created an informal receipt that each young person signed when they received a payment at graduation. Later, we learned from the person who works with the youth that paying them in gift cards to a local mall is less likely to be used for purchasing drugs.

**Adults need to be given the option of what is available in terms of payment.** For example, look at public transportation fares or mileage, meal and lodging reimbursement if it is overnight or a stipend just for facilitating. What I find consistently is that people on teams would rather be volunteers and will accept stipends only when they need it. The extra expenses reimbursed take the edge off the cost of facilitating. Once a facilitator is established in a job, she is likely to say, "No, thank you" to your offer to make it easier to facilitate.

Work with your local council to set up some parameters for payment. As a starting place for your group, AVP-California set this policy in 2007:

*Philosophy:* AVP-CA is a volunteer organization, and we value being able to say we are an "all-volunteer" organization. While we encourage volunteers to: pay for their own meals, seek alternative or, at the least, shared overnight accommodations and carpool or use public transportation whenever possible, we do not want to discourage volunteering by only involving those who can afford to pay these basic expenses. We acknowledge that facilitators will have different financial needs in relation to being able to volunteer in distant locations; thus, a limited amount of money is budgeted to be available to those involved in initial launching of AVP-CA workshop programs who need assistance. Once a local group has been established, we invite them to consider the following policy for their program

*Continued on page 5*



Continued from page 4

## Paying Facilitators...

and facilitators' expenses. Any submissions for reimbursement must be approved by the lead facilitator for the workshop, and receipts shall be provided for all expenses.

**Lodging:** \$75/night for a shared room or where no one is available to share; \$37.50 for a person opting to have a single room. Seeking hospitality in local homes or donated hotel lodging is recommended.

**Food:** Maximum--up to \$30/per day for 3 meals. Receipts must be submitted.

**Transportation:** Full payment of economy public ground transportation. Carpooling strongly recommended.



Individuals carpooling are encouraged to contribute toward driver's gas.

**Mileage reimbursement rate:** 14¢/mile (based on IRS allowance for volunteer mileage).

This section of the reimbursement policy is experimental.

**Lost wages and child-care assistance:** Though we want to preserve the importance of an "all-volunteer" group of facilitators, in order to expand the diversity of our facilitator base and tap recent parolees, we need to

consider the economic differences and be open to the possibility of lost income replacement and child-care costs as a necessity.

The above policy needs to be based on your local group's financial wherewithal and fundraising capability. The next issue of *The Transformer* will cover how others are raising money, but talking about it with all involved will help move the decision along.

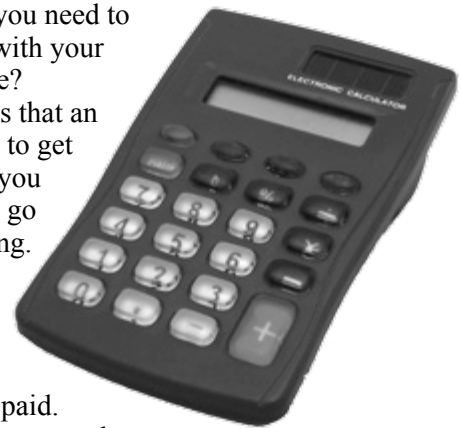
### How one is paid also needs to be clear

- Does the individual have a checking account or need to be paid in cash?
- If you are asking the individual to take a train, does she have the money to do that before receiving your reimbursement? Will you need to make the reservation with your credit card in her name?
- Don't make assumptions that an individual knows how to get the best airline fare if you are paying for them to go to the national gathering. One facilitator who received a scholarship for airfare ended up paying three times the fare that the rest of us paid. Asking if the conference attendee would like some help finding the best rate will often result in a sigh of relief.

When you are used to using your credit card for these kinds of things, you forget that not everyone has one or, if they do, they may have a limit so low that not enough credit is available to charge plane fare on it.

This topic is a practical microcosm of the national debate over income differential.

*Present Pat Hardy*



## Transforming Power in the Dollar Store Line

I was standing in line at the dollar store when the man in front of me (of a different race) turned and said, "Hey man, how about giving me some space?" I was taken aback for a moment; my habit of jumping out of hurt or fear into anger was right at the door. I paused a moment and realized he simply needed more space. So I backed up about a foot and asked him, "Is this enough?" He looked at me, puzzled like he wondered if I

was just being a smart ass, and said, "What?"

I repeated the question, upon which he turned away from me, back toward the register without comment. I could feel the tension in the air. After I pondered the situation a moment, I asked him, "So how's your day been treating you?" Again, he turned to me and said, "What?" with the same puzzled look. So I repeated my question. He stood there staring at



me, then said, "I'm just tired. I've been doing a lot of landscaping."

He took out his cell phone and showed me photos of his work. I said, "Wow! That looks like a lot of work." He said, "It is." The man turned back to the register and checked out. Just as he was preparing to leave, he turned back with a smile and asked me, "What's your name?" I said, "Doug." And he said, "I'm Allen. It's been nice meeting you." I said, "You, too," and we parted on that note.

*Delightful Doug Couch*

## Advanced Training for Facilitators

### From the AVP-L internet discussion

Has anyone done a workshop for current facilitators--a kind of advanced training? We are trying to improve relationships among facilitators, both inside and outside Sing Sing Prison. We are considering a workshop for all inside and outside facilitators. We welcome ideas for exercises or agendas.



*Jackie Labatt-Simon*

The most recent AVP reference manual, published in 2013, is the Facilitators Training Manual, which contains continuing learning material. Pages 139 to 220 cover activities/exercises and agendas for continuing learning and advanced facilitation workshops. This manual is available from the AVP-USA Distribution Center or from the online store at: [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org). If anyone has exercises or agendas of continuing learning workshops that you have done, please send me copies. They will be included in the education collection in future editions of AVP manuals.

*Katherine Smith, AVP Education Committee*

We usually do a one-day facilitator retreat each year at each institution. The retreat centers around team building, leadership skills and new exercises--sometimes a home-grown exercise. The facilitators seem to enjoy an advanced, more focused agenda in these retreats. Last year I brought in Hersey and Blanchard's Leadership Self Assessment, which the group appreciated.

*Diligent Dawn*

We treated an Advanced T4F like a regular Advanced and allowed the participants to choose what they needed for renewal. We used a modified Head, Hand, Heart Exercise (F-21 in the Basic Manual) to identify the knowledge, tools and passion we bring to our facilitating. Jens and I anticipated that people would want to work primarily on tools, but they chose "rekindling our passion." So, most of the workshop focused on heart stuff and went well.

*Margaret Lechner*

## Taking another look at the FTM

When I first saw the new and wonderful Facilitators Training Manual, FTM, I admit it seemed daunting, so I haven't done much with it. I was pleased with how I lead the Training for Facilitators (T4F) Workshop. I was pompous enough to figure the manual had nothing to teach me, and I didn't have time to spend looking into it. Recently I had a little time before a T4F Workshop, so I decided to look up a couple of things. What do you know... I found it to be an incredible resource. I didn't have to read the whole thing to find several useful items.

I purchased the manual on the AVP-USA website. The method for downloading the manual into Word is in the manual. Once downloaded, it is searchable. I checked on handouts and found several that fit well into what I already do. Don't be like me; get in there and find some area you want to improve on and see what you can find. You don't have to swallow the whole thing--just delve into it for different courses, not the whole meal... though eventually you'll have found that you have eaten the whole thing.

*Present Pat Hardy*

## AVP and Politics

It's only natural that AVPers, when they see something unjust in a prison or in the criminal justice system, should speak out. *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander provides many examples. But prison reform or correcting injustice is not part of AVP--at least, not directly.

I remember a regional AVP meeting that took place in the late 1990's at a Friends' Meeting in suburban Baltimore. The question came up about an AVPer who was using her entree to a prison to advocate for prison reform in Maryland. Steve Angell, a pioneer who helped spread AVP around the country and the world, disapproved and stated that the role of AVP is to hold workshops in prison (and in the community) period!!

I was a little shocked, but then I realized his argument was sound. The strength of AVP is its faith that people meeting people in a direct and open way is the best way to break down barriers and move our heads and hearts to take positive action. If AVP gets diverted into political debate and factions, it will detract from its main contribution and strength. Pat Hardy points out that AVP national bylaws specify that: "AVP does not engage in political action or lobbying and does not promote any specific political view as an organization. Members may not espouse a political position in the name of AVP."

But that is not to say that AVPers sit on the sidelines. In Maryland a good number of people, both inside and outside, advocating for justice reform are facilitators or ex-facilitators, but they do not do so representing AVP or in their role as facilitators.

*Excellent Ed Sabin*



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## Letters from Inside Calipatria State Prison\*

### My AVP Experience

When I first walked into a Basic Workshop, I didn't know what to expect because:

1. I'm in a prison with some of the toughest guys around.
2. There's no way I can sit there over a weekend and open up to guys I don't know.

But that group of guys and the workshop were the best things that could've happened to me. The workshop gave me the tools—Guide to Transforming Power—to seek solutions and find common ground rather than resort to old ways of violence. It showed me a true definition of community. In that workshop there was a melting pot of men, some of whom I wouldn't have associated with before. But AVP gave us a commonality and a bond. We felt we could rely on one another.

I have continued with AVP since that workshop and have been fortunate to have been around some awesome people who helped me grow, not only as a facilitator but also as a person. AVP is my family and my community, and I will continue to do what I can to build it up and keep it going on a positive path.

Just about every day I come across someone either talking about AVP or asking about it. Someone heard there's dancing, singing and laughing going on. I say, "Yeah, Dan the Dancing Man makes an appearance sometimes. But there's more to , and you just have to come and check it out." Curiosity often gets to them, and they show up. AVP is one of the best things that ever happened to me, and I know it can make a huge change in many lives here in Calipatria Prison. So, thank you for everything, AVP.

Courteous Chris Ybarra

Hello and God Bless!

I've been incarcerated for 21 years, and it's been a heck of a journey. About the first 10 years, I was in and out of the security housing unit. I couldn't seem to keep myself out of trouble. The way I dealt with problems was often through fighting. In 2010 I was at High Desert State Prison, and a friend, Jason Guinn, introduced me to AVP, NA, AA and the Lifer's Group. These groups, especially AVP, helped me deal with defects in my character. I learned there are alternatives to violence.

I've been participating faithfully for the past 5 years, and I know it works. I put into practice what I've learned in AVP. It has helped with my anger and made me realize how much I have in common with others. In workshops we can discuss and resolve problems together and encourage each other. I'm grateful to AVP. Since participating in it, I have not received any write-ups—only good reports.

I got a GED and some college credits and just got my sentence reduced, so I'm going home. Had I been fighting and getting into trouble, this wouldn't have happened. Self-help really works. This program has the power to transform lives—it helped me a lot. But the main transforming power comes from my father in heaven. God bless.

Raul Martinez

### Going Soft

There I was in August 2012 at Ironwood State Prison, signed up for some class. I planned to just go, check in and leave to chill with the fellows in the yard. Did I have something in store for me!

I always saw self-help groups as a weakness, and I used to put down people for going to them. And now, guess what? I'm one of those soft, weak dudes. I can say to those who think that way that we're really smart and strong because we're smart and strong enough to join positive groups to change our lives and leave our old, immature ways of thinking and acting behind.

For the first workshop, I was just trying to get out of my cell. When I saw Awesome Ann and the facilitators, I thought, "Oh great, now I'm stuck here." But I enjoyed every bit of the light & livelies, the exercises to open my mind and acting like a human being through sharing and talking. I couldn't wait until the next day and then graduation, followed by an Advanced Workshop and then the T4F.

Now I'm chairman of the Inmate Leisure Time Activity Group (ILTAG), a facilitator and, most of all, a member of the AVP family. AVP has changed my core belief system through applying the Guides to Transforming Power in my everyday life. I am learning to let the small things go, to avoid violent confrontations and to communicate more effectively. I recruited a bunch of "homies" who thought they were too hard core to join, and now I get: "Are we having class?" "When are we gonna have a Basic?" and "You ain't gonna get me dancing..."

The next thing I know the fellas are in there doing it all. AVP is alive and well here at Calipatria Prison as is Mrs. Mumbly...

Righteous Raymond Perez

### Mrs. Mumbly Strikes Again

I attended my first AVP workshop thinking about the certificate I would get. Once the workshop got going, it was not the instructional seminar I thought it would be. It was instead a face-to-face, share your feelings, listen to others, dance and sing fest. It was Mrs. Mumbly that finally made me say to myself, "I can't do this!" I wanted to run for the door; but before fleeing, I asked myself if I had more to gain than lose by staying. If I walked out, then I would never know. I knew how broken I was and how much destruction I had caused. I knew how tired and weary I was of being me.

I thank God for giving me the courage and open-mindedness to stay and fully participate. It was the first time in my incarceration I did not feel like I had to watch my back in fear of a physical attack. The camaraderie was that quick, and friendship blossomed. I felt free; and by the end of the workshop, I was on a natural high. I called my family and told them all about AVP.

Since my first workshop, I have had the honor and opportunity to become a facilitator. Thanks so much to Generous Jason, Awesome Ann and Stellar Stacy--to name a few--who believed in me and patiently mentored me. I attended AVP for a certificate, unaware that the real treasure was the positive contribution the workshops made to changing my character and giving me joy to introduce others to the same treasure. Thank you, AVP.

Determined David Morales

### The Positive Impact of AVP

At Ironwood State Prison I met Jason Guinn, who introduced me to AVP in 2011. As an ex-gang member serving life for attempted murder, I doubted that AVP would help me. The three days of the workshop set everything in motion for me. After that, I couldn't get enough of AVP and the positive energy the groups brought. I continued participating and became a facilitator. The program had a positive impact on behavior in the yard. I was sad to learn I was going to a prison (Calipatria) that did not have AVP. Outside facilitators Awesome Ann and Present Pat suggested I try to get AVP started there.

I was doubtful that AVP would get started at Calipatria. I figured we had been forgotten and abandoned, but before long I found that just about every bus transferring inmates here from Ironwood had a facilitator on it. Inside and outside facilitators plus the prison administration helped get the program going here. Thanks to them, the program is up and running and having a positive impact.

Joyful Jacob Mata

*Submitted by Generous Jason Guinn. Calipatria is a large (about 4,000 inmates) prison located 80 miles northeast of San Diego, California.*

### Three Views on How Broken Squares Works

As a facilitator, it is sometimes frustrating to watch a group struggling with the Broken Squares exercise. But if we don't interfere and let the participants (eventually) solve the problem their own way, more learning takes place. The group learns to work together and sees what each person needs to solve their square. Sometimes a person has to break up what seems like a perfectly good square in order to help someone else. When four squares of the right size have been completed but the fifth person is totally unable to make a square, teamwork and empathy are necessary.

After it is over, we ask in what way it was frustrating, what was learned from the exercise, and whether there are times in real life when we must follow arbitrary rules that don't make much sense. Each of us has to learn to be creative and find a way to solve the problem. We can't count on someone rushing in to figure it out for us. In our last workshop, one person who had great difficulty with the exercise wrote on his final evaluation: "This was a life-changing experience for me."

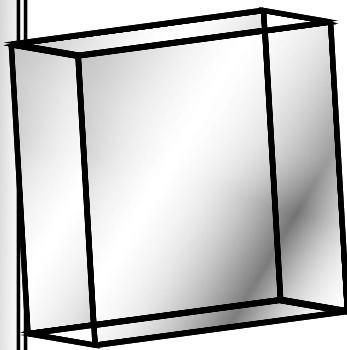
*Mama Marge*

I remember one incarcerated middle school-aged youth reflecting after Broken Squares: "I never realized how selfish I can be."

*Affectionate Anne*

Another "aha" I've taken from this exercise (both as a participant and a facilitator) is the frustration one feels when one is able to see the solution but can't get someone else to see it. As a parent, facilitator or coach, I have to step back and let people go through their own learning process. It's frustrating when I think the path is obvious and right in front of their eyes, but I know that some lessons can be learned only through personal experience. And people learn in their own time.

*Blissful Barbara*



# Looking Back -- Moving Forward

## The 2015 AVP/USA National Gathering

### May 22 – 25, 2015, Seattle, Washington



#### COME EARLY! (For the 2 Pre-Conference Workshops)

1. Next Steps -  
Recovery To Practice
2. Looking Back...  
Moving Forward



### Pre-conference opportunities

#### Friday, May 22; 9 a.m – 5 p.m.: Shaping AVP's Second Generation

Come for a lively discussion that will propel AVP/USA into the next 40 years of success. Join the Committee of Committees in exploring our foundation, investigate our practices and set policy and challenge our decision-making processes.

A sampling of questions:

- What are the essential components of AVP? What are non-negotiable?
- How should we work with AVP "spin-offs"?
- How do we proliferate AVP-based training throughout the social fabric?
- How can we support returning citizens as facilitators?
- Should we develop a speakers' bureau?

#### Thursday and Friday, May 21-22: Recovery to Practice

A unique collaboration with the American Psychiatric Society, this workshop exposes participants to AVP used in a setting of actual therapy — exploring the role AVP can play in mental health programs.

Spearheaded by Mike Murphey and Noelle Pollet joined by APS members. This mental health peer workshop based on AVP and Martin Luther Kings' Beloved Community is presented in collaboration with President Obama's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

#### FEATURED SPEAKER:

Anthony Normore, Ph.D.  
College of Education, California State  
University Dominguez Hills  
Dr. Normore is the Chairman of the  
Criminal Justice Commission on  
Credible Leadership Development with  
the International Academy of Public  
Safety, and the author of several books  
on social justice and cross-cultural  
collaboration, including Moral Compass  
for Law Enforcement professionals.



#### Questions?

Local Conference Committee:

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Rick Krouskop for Registration:  
[registrar@avpusa.org](mailto:registrar@avpusa.org)

Dustin Muller for Scholarship:  
[scholarship@avpusa.org](mailto:scholarship@avpusa.org)

**Register now  
at  
[www.avpusaconference.org](http://www.avpusaconference.org)**

## AVP Public Meeting Gets Media Coverage in Springfield, Massachusetts

Frustrated with murders, violence and negativity, people in Springfield met on January 17, 2015, to learn about peace: the kind of peace inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Springfield Housing Authority hosted the meeting whose purpose was to introduce the public to AVP. Approximately 75 people participated in the meeting while others had to be turned away due to lack of space. AVP facilitators invited local media to the event. Two local TV stations responded and wrote up accounts of the event. The resulting news segments are available online:  
<http://wwlp.com/2015/01/17/frustrated-with-violence-springfield-residents-strive-for-peace-through-avp/>  
<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/story/27876885/group-meets-in-springfield-to-discuss-alternatives-to-violence>

Kathy Rubenstein

## SELMA

Selma, the movie, raises questions for today in AVP.

Jubilant Judy writes:

"Inside prison, the majority of AVP facilitators in the USA are black and brown men and women. The volunteer AVP leadership structure in the free world in the USA is predominantly white.

As we watch the movie Selma, I challenge the white AVP facilitators on the outside to ask ourselves:

**How much do we look to the leadership of the men and women inside prison to grow AVP?**

- How deeply do we on the outside listen to the AVP leadership of incarcerated facilitators?
- Is there space for their voices to be heard?
- Do we continue to ask ourselves how much white privilege plays a role in our lives and in the organization?
- Do we push ourselves to consider the root causes of incarceration and what can be done to change systems?
- Do we work to undo racism?"

Thank you for your insightful queries, Judy.

Considering these questions deeply and answering them with fierce honesty, humility, courage and tenderness holds the key to the future of AVP.

Elevating Eleanor



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](http://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](mailto:editor@avpusa.org)





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Prison AVP groups encouraged.

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