

AVP

Winter 2016

The

TRANSFORMER

Supporting and Celebrating the Facilitators of AVP Workshops

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AVP-USA 2017 Gathering **8-10**

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Registration is now open for the 2017 World Gathering.

Excitement is already building as we prepare to share our AVP stories and experiences with our global AVP community November 5-11 in Kathmandu, Nepal. Visit the World Gathering website at: <http://avp.international/2017nepal/>



AVP African Regional Gathering



World Gathering 2014 in Dublin, Ireland

New Year, New Struggles

What's going on?!?! Donald Trump. The deaths of Muhammad Ali, David Bowie, Leonard Cohen, Prince, and Princess Leia. Ice melting in the arctic in midwinter and the bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef. Syria and Yemen. Unarmed people killed by the police...2016 was a doozy.
Dread Scott, January 2, 2017

In 2017, may we dedicate ourselves prayerfully and actively to banishing violence from our hearts, words and deeds, and to becoming nonviolent people and to build nonviolent communities that care for our common home.
Pope Francis, December 12, 2016

Stay up to date on the latest news and conversations regarding corrections and the changing world of politics in the United States since the election of Donald Trump as President. Look for our "Carceral Continuum" – a column with fresh perspectives and news about the carceral system in the U.S., drawing on personal stories, online sources, and first-hand interviews. The column this quarter features Jondhi Harrell, Executive Director at

the Center for Returning Citizens in Philadelphia.
Enjoy, and stay in touch.



EQUALIZE-IT ELŻBIETA
Transformer Co-editor



Poetry for Peace

The Prison of My Heart by Robert Leon Commodore

The Prison of my heart...
Only allows so much freedom,
Only so much movement,
Only so much joyful justice.

The prison of my heart...
Struggles endlessly within,
From the emptiness without,
And those dreams withheld in doubt.

The prison of my heart...
Hopefully some day in some way,
Will find the mercy inside,
To finally grant my release.

"Remember the prisoners as if chained with them." –Hebrews 13:3

The TRANSFORMER

THE TRANSFORMER is a quarterly publication of the Alternatives to Violence Project of the United States of America.

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Or mail to:

THE TRANSFORMER
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First year as new facilitator is free (submitted by local coordinator).

Back issues may be found at
www.avpusa.org/resources-fac/transformer-archives

This newsletter is printed
on recycled paper.



By VICTORIOUS VICTOR

Once inside these walls, you become dead to the outside world. A place where parents and grandparents pass away, wives and girlfriends move on and your children call someone else Daddy. A place where relatives

But AVP, a multi-cultural volunteer organization dedicated to reducing interpersonal violence in society is different. Its workshops provide conflict management skills that enable individuals to build successful interpersonal relationships. People can gain insight and new approaches

Each workshop is a journey, and no two journeys are alike. Nor will travelers experience the journey in the same way. A workshop is like a tour group: each one is as unique as the individual travelers who compose it. AVP has worked for me. I learned that it's about community, about acknowledging and encouraging the potential for all to grow and develop. It's about working together by agreement and without coercion. It's about respect for yourself and others. True respect means reaching for what looks like truth and justice in yourself, building on it, and reaching for it in others helping them do the same.



Off with their Armor

By PATRICK LARMOUR

In prison, being kind can be risky. Allow one person to step in front of you in line and pretty soon, everyone is cutting you off; offer someone a cup of coffee and they'll try squeezing you for more; smile at a stranger as you pass by and they'll stop to scowl back at you, wondering what your problem is. It is not surprise that, after a while, many prisoners just give up trying to be decent. Can you blame them? Years' worth of punishment have taught us to shun kindness in all forms because it only leads to problems down the road. So, piece by hardened piece, inmates begin putting on armor in the form of hateful glares, shocking tattoos, clenched fists, harsh words – and rejecting any kindness that comes

their way. And once it's fitted, bolted and strapped into place, this armor is very difficult to pry off.

I have been an AVP facilitator for nearly four years. Over this time I have been amazed by the countless transformations I witness taking place in fellow inmates during our workshops. It is remarkable. It's as if, with each new discussion and activity the group leads, I witness pieces of armor fall off. I can almost hear the chain-mail, helmets and breast plates clanging to the floor as the true, kind men beneath are revealed – men who have been there all along, but who only needed a safe environment to show themselves. This transformation is breath-taking in its beauty, and it

is what keeps me coming back to workshops.

Three days is not a long time, but thanks to the loving energy that AVP brings into prisons it allows inmates the time to be humans again. During workshops, we can laugh, cry, reminisce, offer support and actually be humans again for a brief time in an otherwise inhuman place. While many of us have to put our armor back on once we go back to the yard, those of us who have participated in workshops can hinge up our iron masks and smile kindly to one another when we pass by. Thank you, AVP, for helping us shed our armor and learn to be humans again.



NEW

AVP has an **Online Store** located on the RESOURCES page at www.avpusa.org. Purchase by Check, Paypal, or Credit Card: MC, VISA, AMEX, Discover.

Order Manuals, Videos, Books, Transformer Subscriptions and Donate!

KNOW THEIR NAMES



AVP-USA Board News

AVP-USA ended its fiscal year with a budget surplus of \$9,000. The Denver Gathering and Distribution Center incomes were above expectations but general donations lagged. AVP-USA has hired a part-time fundraiser to help with AVP's annual giving campaign among other duties. She is Irene Webb, a facilitator from Santa Fe NM. The Education Committee invites writers to help rewrite Chapter 1 of the Basic Manual and to edit final copy of other publications. An Arabic speaker is needed to edit the Arabic translation of the Basic Manual. An Inside

Facilitator group is being organized to utilize more fully the Transformers for communication with inside facilitators. Richard Chiamulon seeks to revitalize the Re-entry Committee and will poll facilitators about re-entry efforts on the AVP-USA list serve: AVP-L.

The Bylaws Committee will present proposed changes to the Board early in 2017 followed by distribution to anyone interested. For more information on AVP-USA committees, go to <http://avpusa.org/organizational/national-committees> or write to the editor.



AVP on SOCIAL MEDIA

The Public Relations/Outreach committee is interested in coordinating social media efforts. If you keep up some form of AVP social media — Facebook, web site, hash tag, whatever — please contact outreach@avpusa.org

AVP-USA FUNDRAISER: HIRED!

In our Autumn edition, we put the word out for AVP-USA. The Board of Directors was seeking applicants for a fundraiser position. We are pleased to announce that AVP-USA has hired Irene Webb as Fundraising Coordinator! Irene has been an AVP facilitator since 2002, working in California prisons and for the last 6 years in New Mexico.

The Finance Committee is setting up a Fundraising subcommittee to gather momentum. Look for updates on this national fundraising project in the coming months.



*Day 1 of
Orange County
AVP workshop,
October 2016*

**Donate to AVP
every time you shop!**

**Use the Amazon tab
at the bottom of
www.avpusa.org,
and Amazon will
donate 5% of your
purchase to AVP.**

Tell your friends!

Collaborative Manual Writing

The Education Committee has been responsible for the development of AVP manuals since 1976. With more than half of facilitators in the United States inside prisons, the committee wants to involve all interested facilitators. The committee has set up a team to liaison with inside facilitators to solicit new exercises, agendas and special workshop topics. The team is also interested in revisions to existing material. Our initial focus is for a new Advanced Manual. The team desires feedback on how exercises, agendas or special purpose workshops work (or not) in order to share this information with the AVP community and for future editions of manuals.

The major challenge is communication with inside facilitators. The Transformer can serve this function. The Education Committee plans to produce a section in each issue of the Transformer for this purpose. Outside facilitators are asked to support the initiative by collecting draft manual material and taking it in for testing and revision by inside facilitators and bring out the results.

Contributions and feedback can be sent in two ways: Mail the material to the Education Committee c/o AVP-USA Distribution Center, 1005 Selby Ave, St. Paul, MN 55104 (the material will be scanned and emailed to the Education Committee) or email material directly to education@avpusa.org.

Extending the AVP community: the AVP Circles Framework Model

AVP like all training programs, is evolving. The Education Committee has started to collect the wisdom and experience of AVP facilitators. The next generation of manuals will include the changes that will not change the essence of AVP workshops.

Two of these changes are:

1. The increased number of Advanced workshop topics.
2. The growth of workshops based on the AVP experiential learning methodology outside the traditional or 'standard' three workshops (basic, advanced and training for facilitators).

AVP USA has developed a framework model to describe the expanded AVP community.

- The inner circle is the essence of the AVP learning methodology that all of AVP workshops and activities are based on.
- The second circle are the three 'standard' workshops that are facilitated by a team of AVP trained facilitators, within a recognised AVP group, are 18-22 in length and based on the AVP manuals.
- The third circle are AVP Variations that are facilitated by a team of AVP trained facilitators, within a recognised AVP group, are any length, on any topic and are in part based on the AVP manuals. These workshop are developed by the local AVP group and may be:
 - Support standard AVP workshops as facilitators' continuing learning, tasters and support groups.
 - Stand-alone workshops.
- The fourth circle are AVP informed or 'spin-off' training programs that have been developed by AVP facilitators, based on AVP experiential learning methodology, but are conducted by training organizations outside AVP. These workshops can be on any topic, of any length and the facilitators are often paid to facilitate these workshops. AVP USA is working with a number of these groups to develop mutually beneficial associations with AVP.
- The fifth circle are AVP influenced training programs that use some parts of the AVP experiential learning methodology and content.

AVP facilitators from all the second, third and fourth the topic material used in the other areas of the this material is being collected by the Education used in the development of the new Advanced topic

One of the strengths of AVP is that all material in has been tried and tested in the crucible of a prison workshops are real and practical, not theoretical or the manuals has been piloted in prison workshops. The new Team will arrange for all the potential material for the next by AVP inside facilitators, and their feedback about what works development of the next Advanced Manual.



circles can learn from AVP community. So Committee and will be workshops.

the AVP USA manuals workshop. Prison preaching. All material in Liaison with Inside Facilitators Advanced manual will be piloted and what does not work to inform the



Carceral Continuum

The Downside of Video Visiting

Local jails are increasingly replacing in-person visitation with glitchy, expensive video visits. Fortunately, New Jersey Assemblyman Gordon Johnson introduced legislation that would protect in-person visitation from being eliminated in New Jersey. Bill A4389 “requires correctional facilities to allow contact visits.” Similar legislation governing phone rates in prisons and jails was signed into law in August, 2016. “We applaud Assemblyman Johnson for taking the lead on ensuring that people incarcerated in New Jersey and their families are not taken advantage of by an unregulated industry that is only interested in profits and counties that are looking to gain revenue off of those who can least afford it,” said Karina Wilkinson of the New Jersey Phone Justice Campaign. “We welcome Congresswoman Duckworth’s efforts at the federal level to require the FCC to regulate video visitation.” Congresswoman Duckworth (IL-8) introduced legislation, the Video Visitation in Prisons Act of 2016, that would require the Federal Communications Commission to regulate video visitation services, including capping rates, ensuring quality and banning the elimination of in-person visits.

-Bernadette Rabuy

I did 25 years in federal incarceration. For the large part of that I was far from my family. I was in Indiana, as far north as Ray Brook, NY, less than 100 miles from Canada, and United States Penitentiary (USP) Atlanta. That was my longest stretch in one prison, 12 years. The feds and many state people talk about the importance of family reunifications. Statistics show that prisoners who receive regular family visits have a lower recidivism rate. Yet you have a largely urban population that is being imprisoned in rural areas. That makes it very difficult for families to visit.

Video visiting was first touted as a way for people to visit their family more at less expense. In addition to the contact visits, a person could have a video visit, \$20 an hour at about 8 to 10 state prisons. That’s not a bad situation when it’s done in conjunction with face-to-face visits. In Arizona, Sheriff Joe Arpaio phased out contact visits in the county jail. The only visit was video. That has started to become a trend across the country, where prisons are saying that video visits reduce the problem of contraband and don’t require officers to be assigned to a visiting room. But video visits can break down essential family ties that promote the ultimate goal of reunification. Every visit with my family while I was incarcerated furthered my love for them and their love for me. Every visit was an adventure for my family, especially for the kids. My kids grew up in visiting rooms, and they have some really good memories

associated with visits. A visit is like going home for a day. It’s important in cementing family relations and keeping you alive in the heart and mind. Communicating by phone and by letters, and then video, is just not enough. You need face-to-face contact. You need to hug your kids, your wife, your mother, your father. That’s what keeps families alive.

-J. Jondhi Harrell

J. Jondhi Harrell is the Founder and Executive Director of The Center for Returning Citizens (TCRC) in Philadelphia. TCRC offers comprehensive services for prisoners and formerly incarcerated people in the areas of re-entry, pre-entry, and advocacy. He is a frequent guest lecturer on the topics of Mass Incarceration, Social Injustice, The New Underground Railroad, and Re-building Black America at universities, colleges, churches, organizations and community events. Jondhi has a Bachelor’s Degree in Human Service Management from the University of Phoenix and is a Master’s in Social Work candidate at Temple University.



J. Jondhi Harrell speaking with Michelle Alexander, civil rights litigator, legal scholar, and author of The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness

The 2017 AVP-USA National Gathering

May 26 – May 29, 2017

Boston, Massachusetts

www.avpusaconference.org

THAT'S what I'm talkin' about!

Our Theme, this year, is:

Journey of Change: Transforming Ourselves and our Communities.

AVP brings the tools to transform conflict. If we seriously wish to change the course of things, we must look not only at our adversaries, but at ourselves. That means considering our own role in the conflict: our presuppositions, our prejudices, our triggers, our trauma, our participation in larger systems that created the circumstances of the conflict and ways



in which we are actually connected to our adversary. Whether “right” or “wrong”, we still must adapt and grow if we wish to transform conflict in lasting ways. And in changing ourselves, we

signal new possibilities for others, as well. But deliberate change requires the courage to enter new and uncomfortable terrain with bold steps into a future yet undecided. To transform our conflicts, let us be open to transforming ourselves and the communities of which we are part.



Who's on Deck?

Our Speaker:

We are pleased to announce our first keynote speaker, Jean Trounstein, author of *A Boy With a Knife*, and the protagonist in her book, returned citizen and former AVP facilitator, Karter Reed.



Say WHAT??

The Program:

Our program is still in the planning stages. Current tracks include:

- Skill building
- AVP and Restorative Justice
- Going “upstream”: taking AVP to communities where violence happens before prison
- AVP biology: How the brain, the body, and trauma relate to managing anger, to keeping a healthy outlook, and to nonviolence choices.
- Unity, Diversity and Privilege – How do we honor differences in conflict? And how do we diversify our

own ranks? Who is marginalized? Who have we excluded? How do we bring in more voices? How do we accommodate and bring in more youth to AVP?

What else?

As we assemble this program, we invite your voice. What interests you right now? Where are your learning edges? How do we grow as a community? What seems too scary to confront? What transformation shall we endeavor together? Contact us with suggestions at Program@AVPUSA.org or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720.

Come early and stay late!

We invite you to participate in a wealth of additional programming around the gathering:



Thursday, May 25 – Exploring Diversity

A one-day, pre-conference workshop brought by the Education Committee: Participants will experience learning activities and exercises in the morning, and small groups will discuss how to facilitate this topic and develop agendas in the afternoon. This is preparation for including this topic in the next Advanced manual. The workshop is offered twice, so choose either day to attend.

Thursday May 25, 2017 – Prison day at MCI Norfolk

A day with incarcerated men, seasoned inside facilitators, and administration, at a facility that is striving to lead: Norfolk offers innovative programming including: Restorative Justice, Emotional Awareness (based on the nationally recognized Houses of Healing

program), formal debates featuring teams of inmates going against local college debate teams, and, AVP. Join us for a day supporting, learning and celebrating the work going on at this institution.

Friday, May 26, 2017 - Is AVP-USA a Social Justice / Peace Organization?

An open retreat of the Board: Alternatives to Violence Project grew out of strong activist roots, focusing on “finding effective ways to communicate and practice active nonviolence.” (Liveoak: Hoover interview) Ghandi called politics the “art of right action.” AVP’s politics is about not taking sides, but seeking to do the right thing. What is more political than actively working toward self-change of “transformation” of power structures within communities, institutions or systems?

Please join a day long planning retreat as we explore: who we are idealistically as an organization, how we act upon our shared beliefs, and identify implications as we move forward organizationally.



Monday, May 29, 2017, 1:00pm-5:00pm - MOVING FORWARD AS AN ORGANIZATION

The AVP-USA Post-Conference Planning Session: In this session we will break into small thematic groups to process insights learned at the gathering. Each group identifies specific action steps for AVP-USA Board and Committees to follow-up in the year ahead.



Meet the future

AVP Youth at the Gathering 2017

Recognizing growing interest in AVP among people under 18 years old, we actively welcome youth to Gathering 2017. We need to hear from you: Are you aware of young AVP-ers who would be interested in attending? Do you like working with high school kids? Would you like to help as a chaperone or with special programming?

Please contact us at youth@avpusa.org, or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720, with questions, suggestions, feedback or interest in helping to bring youth to Gathering 2017.

The Crib

Location of the Gathering

This year's national gathering will take place at:

Lasell College

1844 Commonwealth Ave.

Newton, Massachusetts, 02466

ph. 617-243-2000

www.lasell.edu



Lasell College, in Newton, Massachusetts, is just outside of Boston. Lasell offers great class spaces, dormitory rooms with or without air conditioning, a volleyball pit and some fields to play on. It's in a beautiful neighborhood within walking distance to local shops and restaurants and the Charles River.

Directions

AVP-USA will offer limited shuttle service from the airport – take the Massport “Logan Express” bus to the Framingham Terminal. Contact Transport@AVPUSA.org with your travel plans to let us know you'll need a lift. Public transportation is also available. Head to the “Riverside” stop on the “Green line,” which is a few blocks from the campus. Contact us at Transport@avpusa.org to arrange a pickup at the Riverside stop.

Sign me up!

Registration

Early bird registration: Feb 15 - March 31, 2017.

Regular registration: April 1 – April 30.

Late registration: May 1 - May 15.

Registration questions? Please contact Julie Crawford: registrar@avpusa.org, or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720.

Huh?

Questions

For other questions that may arise, please send inquiries to at conference@avpusa.org or at P.O. Box 3036, Acton, MA 01720.

On behalf of AVP-Massachusetts and of greater New England,

we're looking forward to seeing you in Boston!

Sincerely,

Chris Campbell

Boston Gathering Committee



Distribution Center (DC) Trivia for 2015-16

How many different products did the DC mail out to customers? - **36**

How many different individuals purchased these products? - **180**

What other countries ordered manuals from the DC? - **Australia, Canada & Rwanda**

What state had the most orders - **California**

What were the total sales for manuals and other items? - **\$33,314**

How many individual orders were received in the year? - **365**

Taking out holidays, what was the average order per day? - **1.4 orders per day**



DISTRIBUTION SERVICE ORDER FORM

1050 Selby Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104 * 1-888-278-7820 * manuals@avpusa.org

REFERENCE MANUALS (English)

	Qty	Total Price
CB Basic	11.50	_____
CA Advanced	17.75	_____
CT Facilitator Training Manual (2013)	11.50	_____
CY Youth	14.95	_____
CO Organizing Kit	14.95	_____

MANUALES DEL COMPAÑERO (Español - Traducido por PAV Mexico)

SB Básico	16.50	_____
SA Avanzado	25.75	_____
ST Capacitación de Facilitadores (2015)	16.50	_____

ADDITIONAL MANUALS & BOOKS

HI HIPP Manual (AFSC 2009)	30.00	_____
AT Trauma Healing Manual (Hoover 2013)	12.50	_____
AU Sydney Concise Manual (Australia 2012)	14.00	_____
TA Transforming Power - AVP in Action	11.00	_____
TP Transforming Power for Peace (Apsey)	6.50	_____
Lpp Little Book of RJ for People in Prison	4.95	_____
PH Nonviolence & Community (Pendle Hill)	4.00	_____

THE TRANSFORMER (Quarterly Newsletter)

TE Electronic subscription	12.00/yr	_____
E-mail address _____		

T1 Paper (Currently Incarcerated People)	5.00/yr	_____
T1 Paper 1 yr (4 Issues)	16.50	_____
T2 Paper 2 yr (8 Issues)	27.50	_____
T3 Paper 3 yr (12 Issues)	38.50	_____

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SHIPPING & HANDLING OPTIONS

Media Mail: 5 to 8 days.
First item - \$2.85, additional items \$0.75 each

Priority Mail: 2 to 3 days.
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Flat rate envelope holds 2 manuals - \$6.50

Ship by: _____ Priority Mail _____ Media Mail

When orders exceed \$200, we will add insurance.

SHIPPING INFORMATION

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Payment: _____ Check/Money Order (payable to: AVP- USA)
Credit Card: _____ Visa _____ Mastercard _____ Discover

Credit Card #: _____
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Name: _____
(as it appears on card)

Address: _____

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E-Mail: _____



The Transformer, AVP-USA, Inc.
1050 Selby Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104

Address Service Requested

THE TRANSFORMER is the Alternatives to Violence Project-USA newsletter published quarterly in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter by AVP-USA Distribution Center in St. Paul, Minnesota.



**You are warmly invited
to the AVP National
Gathering 2017 in
Boston, Massachusetts**



SUBMISSIONS: SPRING 2017

Write a letter to the editor. Submit ideas for workshops and activities. Send questions about the AVP-USA organization – how it works, and how you can have a voice. Please submit by February 28th to PO Box 295, Franklin NY 13775 or editor@avpusa.org

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