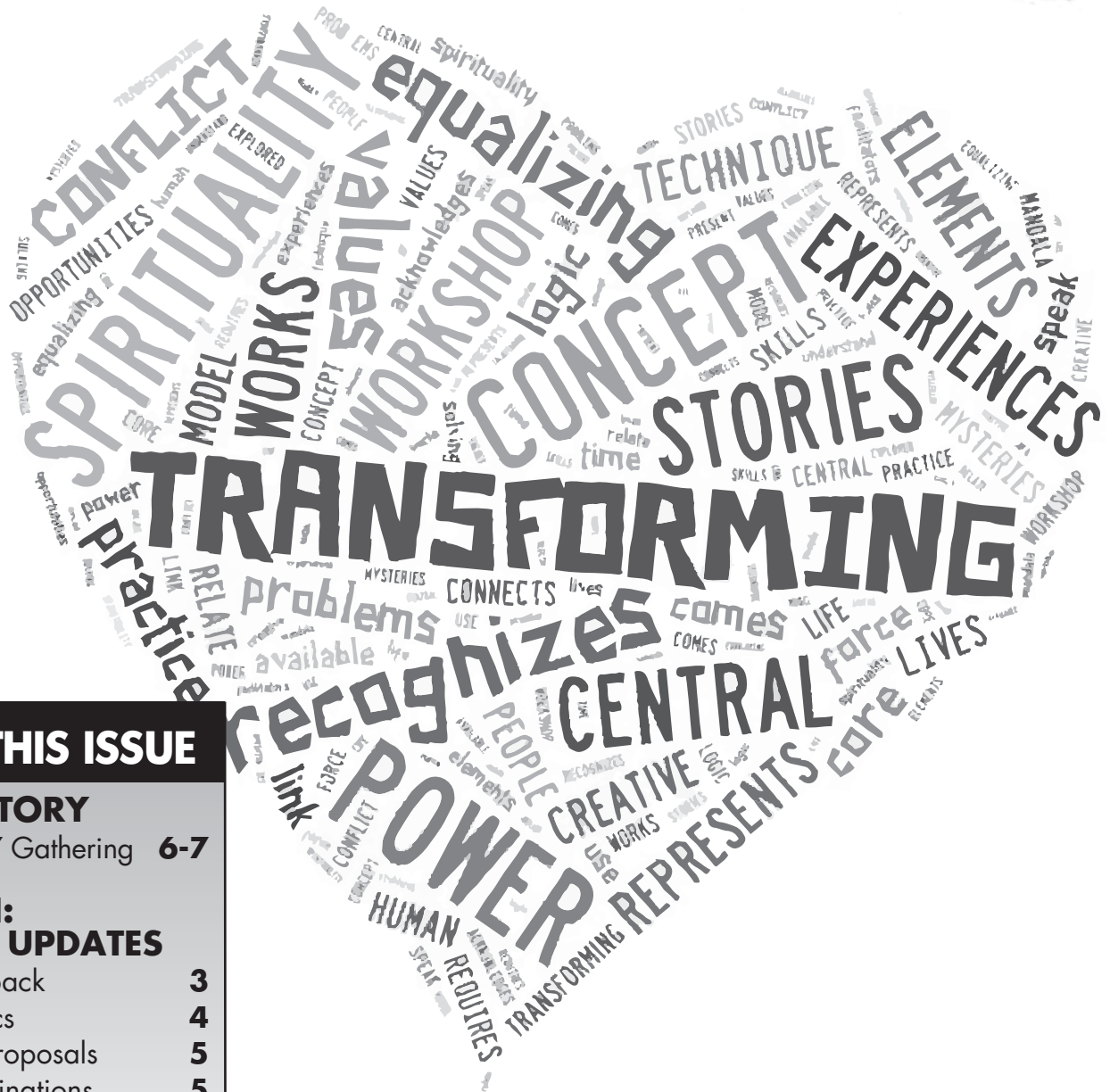


Supporting and Celebrating the Facilitators of AVP Workshops



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Spring News from AVP-USA and AVP-International

There is still snow on the ground in some parts of the country... but by the time you receive this, Spring will have officially begun! This issue celebrates Spring by sharing updates regarding AVP-USA's upcoming national gathering this May – look on pages 6-7 for more information. In more AVP-USA news, we announce the recent hire of a national AVP fundraiser, who will work with facilitators around the country to publicize important stories about AVP and the nonviolence work we do every day in our communities. Read more on page 5, where we also provide a summary of the proposed by-laws changes. This proposal is the

result of months of work contributed by members of the by-laws committee, and the policy changes will be voted on at this May's gathering.

Look for updates on AVP-International work as well as AVP-USA work with veteran communities on pages 8-10 – including a brochure developed for AVP-Guatemala last year. Find a new piece about AVP and Politics on page 4 – written by my co-editor, Ed Sabin. Ed's piece contributes to the ongoing dialogue around the country around the role of AVP-USA in politics, social justice work, and activism. Lastly, find a throwback to 2015 on page 3 – Believing Barbara continues the

dialogue around the word “mandala.”

If you have any thoughts on these or any other topics, please write to us! We love to hear from you.

Enjoy, and stay in touch.

Peace,

EQUALIZE-IT ELŻBIETA
Transformer Co-editor



The TRANSFORMER

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

Editorial Coordinators: elżbieta putrycz and Ed Sabin

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Or mail to:

THE TRANSFORMER

P.O. Box 295, Franklin NY 13775.

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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.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons recognizes AVP as a Model Program!

In January, the Federal Bureau of Prisons posted that they have recognized AVP as a Model Program! We are grateful for the work and the recognition your work has brought AVP!

We are especially grateful to Chaplain Michael Beck and Lea Brickford, Religious Services Assistant, both at FCI Ray Brook, for their consistent support!

Chaplain Beck offers, "Congratulations on being further recognized as an organization for the quality content and results of all the work you do!"



Throwback to Last Year's Winter Edition, Released in January 2016:

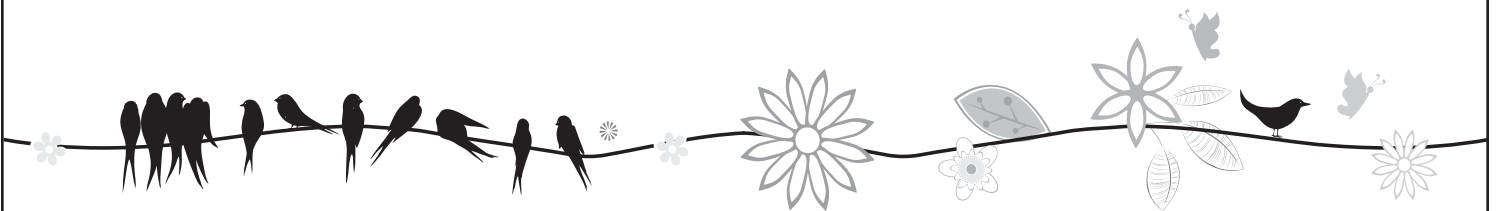
In the Winter issue of the *Transformer*, I noted the discussion regarding the use of the term, “mandala”.

In India mandalas are created, usually on the ground, using colored powders, flowers, grains, etc. They are especially beautiful when used in cultural celebrations which may or may not have a particular religious symbolism. Their circular form denotes wholeness, unity and harmony. One definition states that it is an integrated structure organized around a unifying center. All of these ideas can certainly apply to what we are aiming for through AVP practices.

On the other hand, the Spanish phrase, “Mandala” meaning, as has been pointed out, “Command her” has a distinct pronunciation. The three letters “a” in Spanish have the sound of “a” as in Father, that is to say with the sound “ah”.

The Three letters “a” in the Sanskrit derived word, “mandala” have the sound of “uh” as in fun, sun, money or Monday. In both cases the accent is on the first syllable. I think that if we pronounce the word correctly as “muhnduhla” instead of “Mahndahla”, we could avoid confusion and not have to change to a neutral term such as “circle” – which we use so often in AVP to denote the pattern for arranging our chairs. The mandala which we use in AVP, after all, has a special meaning for us and therefore, the use of a special term is warranted.

I am an outside facilitator at Graterford prison and have lived 27 years in India and 7 years in Peru - and I love studying languages - therefore my interest in the use of this term. -Believing Barbara



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 or write to PO Box 295, Franklin NY, 13775.

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!

AVP and Politics

By Ed Sabin

The AVP Board is planning an open retreat on Friday, May 26, at the upcoming gathering on "Is AVP a Social Justice/Peace Organization?" A timely question as evidenced by a flurry of recent posts on AVP-L, the national AVP list serve (facilitator pages on the AVP-USA website show how to get on the list serve).

Martin Krafft posted: *One way for AVP groups to lean in to the current political climate is to offer community mini-workshops called Resistance Recharge, helping concerned citizens bond and rejuvenate in their efforts to defend our pluralistic society. A chance to explore what values one holds dear and practice strategies for dealing with conflict between fellow activists as well as see the humanity of even those who threaten our way of life. If AVP does not lean in to our current political climate in a way that honors AVP values and practice, we*

will be irrelevant. Doing so in no way undermines our efforts to be inclusive or nonviolent.

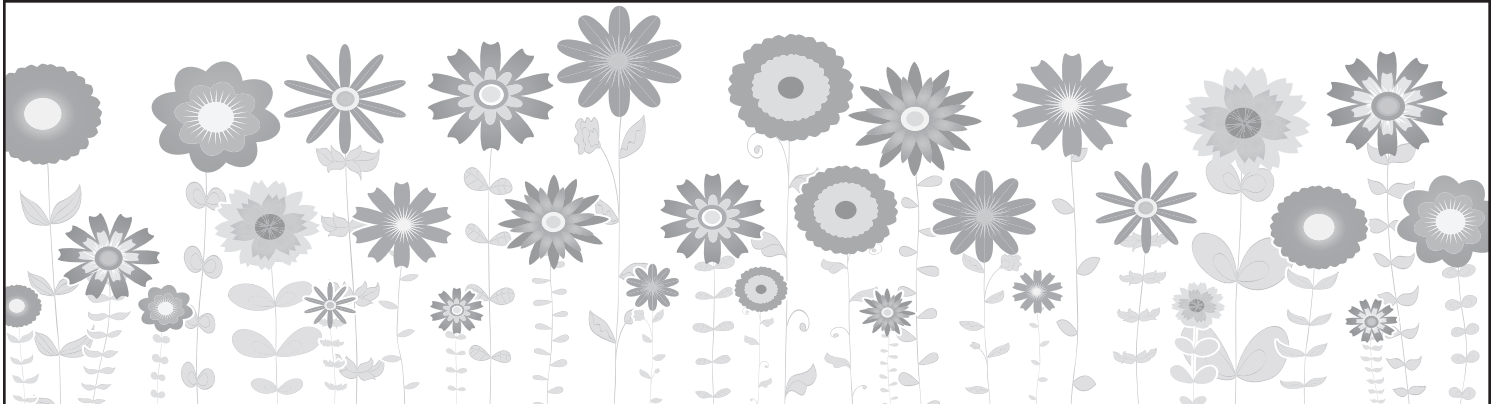
Roger Kluck posted: *I am very much ... about not contaminating AVP with partisan politics. Many of us are passionate about our beliefs and about justice and where things are or are not going. We cannot let AVP become a tool of one side. It will greatly limit where we can go and who we can reach.*

Susan Rios noted in her post that she and other facilitators display a poster at the beginning of each workshop that says: *Everyone is important and everyone is valuable. We try to develop a sense of community based on respect for all people...we develop our own power to find nonviolent ways to resolve conflict.* She added that her team tries to build an inclusive community where, as Father Greg Boyle of Homeboy Industries puts it,

"There is no us and them, just us."

My guide on politics and AVP is based on a statement made by AVP pioneer Steve Angell about 20 years ago at a Mid-Atlantic regional meeting. Responding to a facilitator who advocated that AVP get on board with a prison reform agenda, Steve declared, "The business of AVP is to hold workshops; period." Does this mean that Steve opposed prison reform? Or the rights of indigenous peoples everywhere? Or a living wage for workers? Or the right of the American people to health care?

Not at all. Steve probably, as do many AVP facilitators, supported many progressive causes, but he did not see causes as the main mission of AVP. He probably thought that the positive effect of AVP, if there is such an effect, is due to what happens in workshops and not from advocating particular positions.



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!

Proposals Regarding AVP-USA Bylaws and Policy

At the 2016 AVP-USA Annual National Gathering, a number of concerns arose among facilitators that led to proposals to amend AVP-USA Bylaws. The amendments primarily seek to:

- Create a more inclusive organizational structure for AVP-USA
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the AVP-USA Board
- Clarify the nominations process for officers of AVP-USA
- Clarify the relationship between the local, regional and national levels of AVP
- Adjust language contradictions in the current Bylaws

The process of creating the proposed amendments has been on-going via conversations between members of the Bylaws Committee (formed at the Denver gathering) and members of the Board.

Questions Addressed by Proposed Changes:

Are the AVP-USA Bylaws clear and concise?

Is the AVP-USA Policy Statement clear and concise?

Are the Bylaws and Policy Statement consistent with AVP principles?

What is the relationship between local groups, regional groups and national?

How can someone become a member of the AVP-USA Board?

Who are these people?

How can Board members be removed or replaced?

What do officers and Board members do?

What are AVP-USA standing and ad hoc committees?

Definition of "Local Groups" and "Regional Organizations"

Would a more diverse pool of facilitators be recruited if they could be paid for their work?

How politically active should AVP facilitators and groups be when using the name "AVP"?

Should these decisions be made at the local level or by AVP-USA?

More information is available on the AVP-USA listserv and on the AVP-USA website. Questions, comments and concerns should be sent to the Bylaws Committee by email at bylaws@avpusa.org.

Nominate Leaders for AVP-USA

We will be seeking consensus to select a **President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary for AVP-USA at this year's national gathering in Boston**. These officers are essential to the behind-the-scenes work to keep AVP-USA operating.

We are reaching out to the wider AVP community to seek nominations for each position. Each nominee will be contacted to confirm their interest, provide more information about the position they are being nominated for and gauge qualifications. All nominations and information gathered will be sent to the Board of Trustees of AVP-USA. A final consensus process for each candidate will take place at the national gathering in Boston on Memorial Day weekend.

Please fill out this form to the best of your ability when nominating a person for a position: <https://goo.gl/forms/lgYbQMlyXNQKAdwJ2> or mail your nomination to the editor (PO Box 295, Franklin, NY 13775).

Note: Nominations were closed March 31. However, if you have a strong recommendation send it in.

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.

Registration is now open for: The 2017 AVP-USA National Gathering May 26 – May 29, 2017 Boston, Massachusetts

**"JOURNEY OF CHANGE:
TRANSFORMING OURSELVES AND OUR COMMUNITIES AS WE TRANSFORM CONFLICTS"**

www.avpusaconference.org

"We believe that there is in the universe a power that is able to transform hostility and destructiveness into cooperation and community, and to do justice among us."

AVP Basic Manual A-2

Let us come together to share our knowledge, teach, support and inspire each other as we celebrate the Alternatives to Violence Project. Spend a beautiful long spring weekend on the campus of Lasell College just outside of Boston.

CONFERENCE TRACKS

- Facilitator Skill Building
- AVP-USA, the Organization
- AVP and Criminal Justice
- AVP and Biology
- Upstream in the river of violence
- Unity, Diversity and Privilege



"Empowerment does not come about immediately or by accident. It is achieved by planning that consciously incorporates certain basic dynamics, and by a training style that consciously seeks to transfer power from the facilitators to the participants."

AVP Basic Manual C-2



SPEAKER

Our first keynote speaker is Jean Trounstein, author of "Boy With a Knife," together with the protagonist in her book, returned citizen and AVP facilitator, Karter Reed.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday Day May 25:	Prison day at MCI – Norfolk, a facility that strives to lead with innovative programming
Thursday Day May 25:	Education Committee workshop: exercises, small groups, preparation for the next Advanced Manual
Friday Day May 26:	Pre-conference retreat for AVP-MA Board. Open to all. "Is AVP-USA a Social Justice/Peace Organization?"
Friday Evening May 26:	Opening of Conference
Saturday Day May 27:	Plenary, Workshops, Evening Program
Sunday Day May 28:	Plenary, Workshops, AVP-USA Business Meeting, Evening Program
Monday Morning May 29:	Workshops and Closing
Monday Afternoon May 29:	Open Board Planning Meeting: "Moving Forward As an Organization"

It is not a journey of steps that can be sequenced or measured, but rather a collection of Transforming Power moments that build upon one another in the individual participant's memory. Whatever community you are volunteering in, there will be workshop moments you are privileged to witness... Whatever and wherever the community is in which you facilitate AVP, these moments when you witness Transforming Power will occur, and you will recognize with great joy that you helped facilitate the experience. Your journey of empowerment will become one of witness and self-discovery, energized by your joy.

AVP Facilitators Training Manual 19

CONFERENCE LOGISTICS

Our Gathering homebase will be:

Lasell College

1844 Commonwealth Avenue, Newton, MA 02466

ph 617-243-2000

www.lasell.edu

AVP-USA will offer limited shuttle service at \$20 per one way ride from Logan Airport, North Station and South Station in Boston. Public transportation is also available. Head to the "Riverside" stop on the "Green Line" of the "T," Boston's mass transit system. Contact Transport@AVPUSA.lrg with your travel plans to let us know if you need a lift.



Our organizational model is one of building from the grass roots up. We believe that this approach is essential to nonviolence training. Our decision-making process is one of consensus. We are wary of too much formalization, and we resist anything that might encourage a hierarchy among us. AVP is not about hierarchy; it is about community, about acknowledging and encouraging the potential of all of us to grow and develop, and about working together by agreement and without coercion."

AVP Basic Manual A-5



REGISTRATION and RATES

www.avpusaconference.org

Early bird registration ends – March 31, 2017

Regular registration: April 1 – April 30

Late registration: May 1 – May 15

Early bird registration rate: \$347 - double room occupancy

Early bird Commuters package: \$118

QUESTIONS? SUGGESTIONS?

We encourage your voices. What is on your mind? What are your learning edges? How do we grow as a community? What needed change is too scary to confront? What did you always want to know or have clarified? Contact us with your thoughts at Program@AVPUSA.org.

CONTACT SUMMARY

Main Conference

www.avpusaconference.org

Transportation

Transport@AVPUSA.org

Program suggestions, questions

Program@AVPUSA.org

Youth participation

Youth@AVPUSA.org

Get involved or lend a hand

Conference@AVPUSA.org



Thank You from AVP International

GratITUDE. That is the word that comes to mind when we reflect on the AVP international community. Gratitude for the wisdom, insight and hours of volunteer labor donated by AVP colleagues. Gratitude for the \$19,000 plus donated by facilitators and friends in the past year which continues to support AVP International's many projects and activities.

In November, AVP'ers will come together in Nepal for our tri-annual gathering to review the work done since the 2014 gathering and to set priorities for the future. Connections made at the World Gathering enable us to carry on across geographical distance and over the years. Scholarships are essential to bring representatives from many of the 50 countries where AVP is active. The 2016 grant of \$5,000 to match scholarship donations has just received an additional pledge of \$2,000. New donors to the World Gathering Scholarship Fund will have their donation matched dollar-for-dollar through the early-bird registration period for the gathering.

Communication is the core of AVP workshops and is key to AVP International. One member of the leadership team tells us, "Having the home internet connection provided by AVP International allows me to participate

in committee work at hours when internet cafes are closed." Our website, www.avp.international, is another form of communication--both as the outward face of AVP International to the rest of the world and as a platform for sharing information and resources among facilitators. Your donation helps fund the stipend of our webmaster and makes it possible for AVPers from around the globe to collaborate to develop the next generation of AVP.

The Education Committee has been working with AVPers in Sudan to translate the Basic Manual into Arabic--a translation eagerly awaited by newly trained facilitators in Sudan and other Arabic speaking countries as well as by facilitators in Europe working with recent immigrants. The Education Committee has received requests for translations into Hebrew, Swahili, Portuguese, Kinyarwanda and Georgian.

Please donate online at <https://avp.international/donations/> or send a check in U.S. dollars to: AVP International, PO Box 164, Purchase, NY 10577 USA

Thank you.

Bronwen Hillman, President; Margaret Lechner, Treasurer; Nancy Shippen, Fundraising Chair: AVP International

AVP for Veterans?

By Rev. Tom Davis

I am a retired pastor and Vietnam vet who has organized an interfaith group of veterans in Wilmington, Delaware called the Interfaith Veterans' Workgroup (<http://www.ivw.website>). We're exploring ways to help veterans transition from making war to civilian life. We formed because of concern about the high rate of suicide among veterans. I work with Quakers who introduced me to the Alternatives to Violence Project. I haven't taken AVP training yet but intend to participate in

a demo of an AVP workshop.

I believe that AVP could address a deeper wound of some veterans suffering from PTSD, namely, moral injury. I did a cursory web search to discover whether anyone is using AVP expressly for returning veterans. Beyond the Seattle chapter of AVP (www.projectsforacivilsociety.org), I didn't find any programs specifically using AVP with returning veterans.

Do you know of anyone else who is using AVP to address the anger symptoms so frequent in vets with PTSD and the guilt burden due to moral injury from the experience of combat? If so, please put me in contact with them. I believe that AVP training would help heal veterans' soul wounds and give them an opportunity, if they become AVP trainers, to use their wisdom for the good of their communities.



PAV Guatemala es una organización sin fines de lucro, manejado por voluntari@s, dedicada a la construcción de la Paz, promoviendo y organizando el programa educativo de PAV.

El proyecto fue creado hace 40 años y está actualmente activo en más de 50 países alrededor del mundo.

Para más información de nuestro programa en el entorno global visita nuestro sitio web internacional:

www.pavinternational.org



Participa en nuestros talleres:

**Llevando herramientas
para que la paz
sea un estilo de vida**

Agradecimientos a:



Equipos Cuáqueros de Paz
Peacebuilding en las Américas

Junta Cuáquera de Nueva Zelanda

Para inscripciones y más información:

www.pavguatemala.org

pavguat@gmail.com



PAV Guatemala

Tel. 47056856



PAV Guatemala
P a z A c c i ó n V i d a

¿QUÉ ES EL PAV?

PAV consiste en talleres participativos y vivenciales en grupos pequeños, basados en la educación popular.

A través de actividades dinámicas se adquieren herramientas y estrategias para ayudar con:

- mejorar las relaciones interpersonales
- afrontar problemas
- mejorar el trabajo en equipo
- comunicar de manera eficaz en situaciones difíciles
- manejar emociones fuertes como el miedo y el enojo
- respetarse a sí mismo/a, al igual que respetar a los demás
- encontrar respuestas pacíficas a los conflictos y la violencia

TALLERES Y TEMAS

Nuestros talleres abarcan los siguientes temas:

Nivel 1 Autoestima
Cooperación
Comunicación
Resolución de conflictos

Nivel 2 Diversos temas decididos en consenso por las y los participantes
Recuperación del Trauma



COMUNIDAD

Los talleres buscan fomentar confianza y un sentido de comunidad entre las y los participantes para que experimenten lo que es vivir en paz.



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TRANSFORMA VIDAS"

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Los talleres son para tod@s

- Personal de empresas
- Líderes comunitarios
- ONGs
- Iglesias
- Mujeres
- Jóvenes
- Estudiantes y docentes
- Cualquier persona interesada

CÓMO INVOLUCRARTE

Participando en los talleres

Pidiendo un taller para tu personal de empresa o equipo de trabajo

Capacitándote como facilitador/a para multiplicar el PAV

Ayorando el programa con tu donación.

Para más información visita nuestro sitio web
www.pavguatemala.org



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E-Mail: _____

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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.



SUBMISSIONS: SUMMER 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 July 15th to PO Box 295, Franklin NY 13775 or editor@avpusa.org

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Register for the **AVP National Gathering 2017 in Boston, Massachusetts by MAY 15 to attend! See registration rates on page 8.**