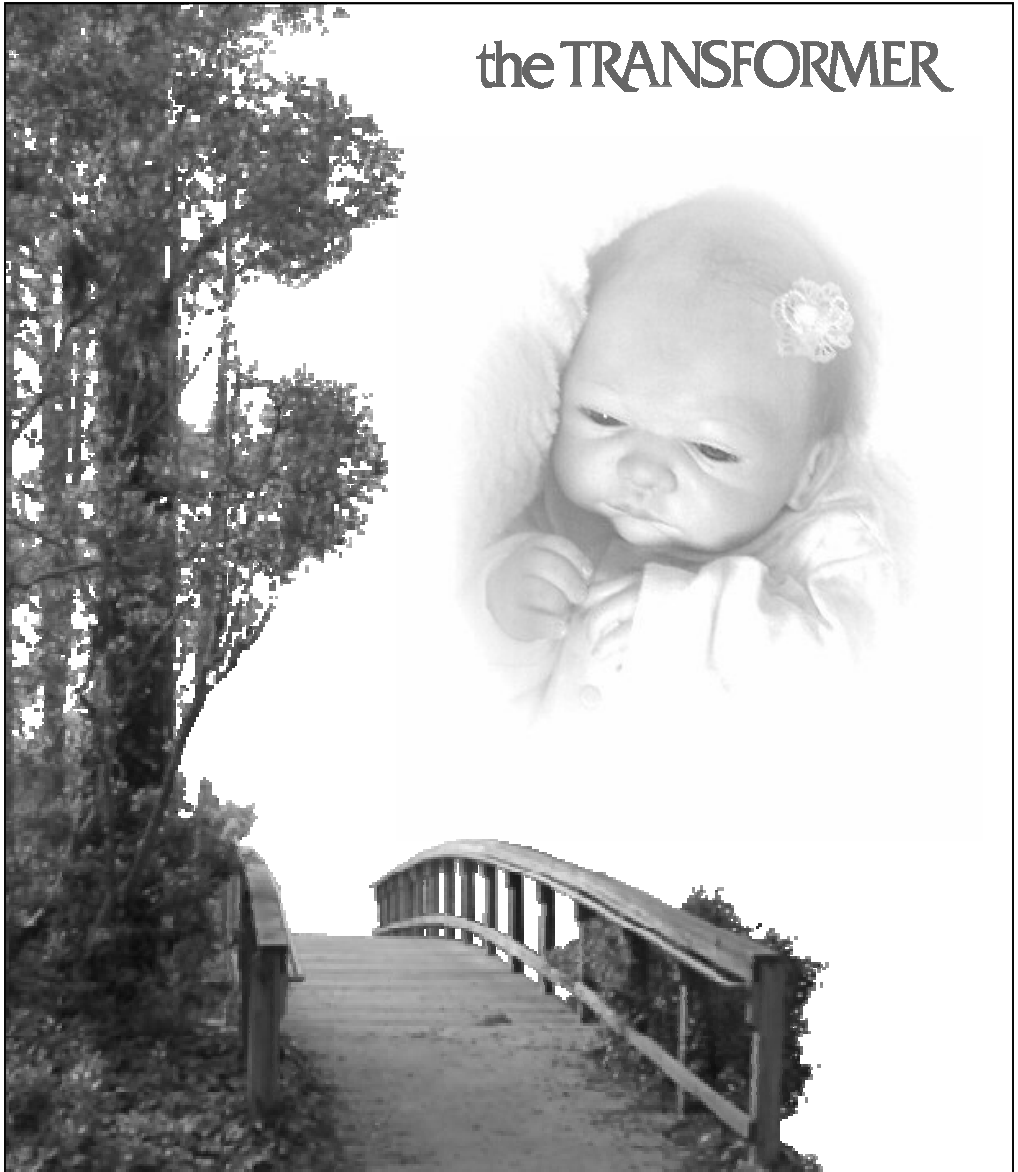


**AVP** . . . a new world, just a breath away

SPRING

*Alternatives to Violence Project Newsletter*

2006



the TRANSFORMER

# AVP<sup>®</sup>

*... a new world, just a breath away*

Early in our lives, we trusted so easily, but over time we departed from this primal understanding and, based on experience of the world around us, somehow these precious times slipped away. As we ventured forth on each new experience, this shift solidified into judgments of people and things we liked, desired and pursued, and those we did not.

In the hustle and bustle of adult life, we planned our futures, and set out upon grand journeys, hardly noticing at times that we had alienated many of those people in our experienced world. And yet, at times, we would notice that our moments had a hollow quality, and we wondered why. In those fleeting encounters with awareness, we found our feelings mixed...a little joy, and almost a tear of sadness...for in our search for momentary comfort, our understanding of oneness with others shifted. Our sense of community constricted, and we began to experience isolation and loneliness.

Often, we tried to cover our discomfort by adding more people to our friends and experiences list,

but a certain something was distinctly missing, and we longed to feel free, satisfied and whole.

But perhaps unknowingly, we had learned to judge our world according to our feelings experienced there, and without our sense of community and oneness, our sense of wholeness also seemed lost.



At times, our world appeared as a vicious cycle of violence, retaliation and conquest. Not only in wars and gang activity, but also in more subtle ways, our environment surrounded us with abuses and limitations, and we longed to be free and to know the innocence of the child we remembered ourselves to have been. And yet, we failed to realize that the rift generating our discomfort was within us, rather than in the environment where we experienced it.

Where is that safe environment we thought we knew, that vanished so quickly...now just a distant memory? What abused us and boxed us into a life far less than

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

what our hopes, plans and goals dreamed of and strove toward over the years?

AVP came into our life and finally, we had an opportunity to help others with whom we shared our common plight...an opportunity to make the world environment better. We saw AVP assist us to improve, and set our life on a course to facilitate and share this with others, to help them improve as well.

We embraced this astoundingly effective tool, and exercised our choices toward fixing an environment that had become so difficult. Workshop after workshop, we shared AVP's process with others. And workshop after workshop, we continued to be impacted by the workshops as well.

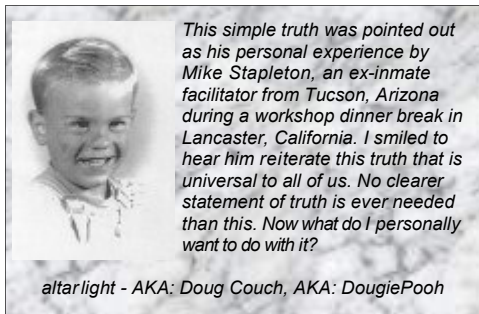
Back in that first workshop, it had been so clear that a unifying synergy was building bonds of community between us. As we facilitated this experience for others, it seemed that we were adding others to that community, and of course, we were. Truly a transforming power.

From the beginning with AVP, we saw it. We had heard others say it. And then one day, it hit home. Every workshop had been for me!

The "community" being built, was being built in me!

Here at last, the "aha" of a lifetime breathed itself through me, renewing my mind, and the world was no longer an environment separate from me. I sensed an infinite bonding of myself to all these I had regarded as "other" than myself. The cripple. The wise sage. The corrupt politician. The parent. The child. Ah yes, the child I left behind was right here with me all the while, and I smiled to know it. All these years had seemed to be passing by with my joy unfulfilled, and all these years, a new world had been but a breath away, holding this smile just for me. ☸

The foregoing article was written by a *14-year* non-facilitator who just happened to encounter this same "aha" of transforming power outside of AVP...and because of involvement with AVP, it became clear what...or rather "who" AVP is truly about...  
*Doug Couch, Editor*





## ***REFLECTIONS ON MARIA RIFO***

### ***NO AGE-ISM IN AVP!***

*Dotty Joos*

Ten years ago I talked to my Chilean friend Maria Rifo about my new experience with AVP. At that time we got together one afternoon a week. She kept my rudimentary Spanish going with conversation and we would sit around her dining room table for two hours while I struggled. Then we would get in my car and spend two more hours making the circuit of her favorite vegetable stands and natural food

stores. (She eschewed supermarket locations with products that exploited the labors of the farmworker.)

A month later, just after her 90th birthday, she said to me, "I want to become a facilitator of that program and bring it into the Spanish-speaking community here." And she did. She facilitated for several years before she found her energy no longer up to three long days.

When she could no longer do AVP, she turned to other less stressful activities in the community, including Marshall Rosenberg's nonviolent communication. Earlier this year she had a Spanish NVC group meeting at her home. Never one to stop learning, last week she said, "I want you to teach me meditation."

Sunday night she went to the hospital. When she arrived her blood pressure was 20. They got it up a bit but her organs were failing. We talked; she was fully conscious, drug-free, without pain or breathing difficulties, but very tired. In early evening she fell into a doze and quietly passed away . . .



**FURTHER REFLECTIONS:** *Adapted from articles by Katy Hillenmeyer, The Press Democrat (2006); Diane Ainsworth, Berkeleyan (2002); and an ACLU press release (2002) - (quoted on the web site of "Jeff" of Novato, California (2006))*

Born in La Serena, Chile, beloved activist Maria Rifo, the modest matriarch of Santa Rosa's Latino community whose friendship with César Chávez sparked four decades of social justice outreach...died at 98.

After hearing César Chávez speak, she moved to California and for 12 years she worked as his secretary, translating the grower's contracts into Spanish and helping make the union run. Her apartment was filled with photos of Chávez, whose lessons in putting people before profits resonated with her... Rifo's career with the [United Farm Workers] union spanned from 1968 to 1980. "César used to get after her and say, 'You have to put this [contract translations] in the language people use, not in the language of books,'" recalled Dotty Joos of Occidental, a longtime friend. "It woke her up to the fact that you really need to pay attention to the people you're working with and give them what they need, not what you think they need."

Rather than rest on her laurels after a long and difficult life as a farmworker in the Central Valley, she did volunteer work with the Alternatives to Violence Project, helping to start a Spanish-speaking group in Santa Rosa, California. At ninety-five years of age, Maria Rifo, who learned how to mobilize downtrodden people from her mentor, farm-labor organizer César Chávez, "[found] beauty in involvement." An advocate of children and families, Rifo was honored by the American Civil Liberties Union of Sonoma County by presentation of the Jack Green Civil Liberties award, citing her role in fighting alcohol and drug abuse, counseling prison inmates in Folsom, and empowering Latina women through groups including Mujeres Unidas.

Jeff of Novato expressed his appreciation of Maria by sharing from an ACLU press release: "At age 95, Maria Rifo [had] a lot to be proud about. Unlike many who have reached this age, she [got] up early to walk Santa Rosa's streets. She [lived] simply and [did] not have much money but [was] able buy food for those who are down-on-their-luck. ☚

**Materials:**

A jar of vaseline,  
a large bag of cotton balls, strips of masking tape to make a starting/finish line, one chair per team and one table per team.

**Make teams:**

Divide people into teams of 5 to 8 people- however many it takes to have teams consisting of an equal number of participants.

*Hint: You'll probably end up with two or three teams unless your group is well over 20. Allow members of the facilitation team to participate to even up the number of participants on each team; to be fair, the number of people on each team should be the same.*

**Setup:**

1. Set up a long table along the wall at one end of the room. Set up one chair per group at the opposite end of the room so that one chair faces each team.
2. Line the teams up at one end of the room where the tables are, facing the wall at the opposite end of the room where the chairs are. Put some masking tape on the floor in front of the group leader to serve as a starting line/finish line for each group. *(To avoid any argument as to the location of the starting line, you can simply run one strip all the way across in front of each team.)*
3. Put 3 approximately equal piles of cotton balls on each chair opposite each team. Have each participant put a dab of Vaseline on their nose.

**Play:**

When the referee says, "go!", the first person in line hurries to the chair opposite, and, without using their hands, sticks as many cotton balls as possible to their nose, and runs back, depositing the cotton balls onto the table by shaking them off their nose without using their hands.

Have the first person hold out their hand so that as the first person comes back, they slap the second person's hand as a signal to go.

**There are two possible winners in this game; the team who finishes first and the team who carried the greatest number of cotton balls.**

a light 'n lively submitted by eric smith, denver, colorado

## ***SPORTS TEAMS & CLUES***

### ***a consensus exercise***

*Bodacious Larry Bratt & the late Thriving Tom Wright*

The MCIJ AVP group in Maryland has at times experienced delay and frustration at the various consensus exercises offered in the AVP Advanced text. Even the shortest version can take 4-6 hours to reach consensus, and at times can foster hurt feelings for the remainder of the workshop. The “***Sports Consensus Exercise***” actually builds consensus within the group, is fun, and is time friendly...while matching clues to sports teams.

**Purpose:** To have members of each group agree on the answer to each clue, in order to achieve Consensus Building.

**Directions:** Discuss among team members the best and most accurate name of the Sports Team from the available clue.

**Clue Example:** President's Natives—Washington Redskins

### **Football, Baseball & Basketball Teams**

#### **CLUES**

A Singer's Horses  
 Bay Area Big Men  
 A Lord's Birds  
 Lone Star's Lawmen  
 California's Evaders  
 Texas Spacemen  
 Charm City's Birds  
 Bay Area Supporters  
 Ruth's Boys  
 Davis' Pirates  
 Mormon's Music  
 Tennessee Bears  
 California's Royalty  
 Arizona's Heat  
 Oregon's Pioneers  
 California's Water-lovers  
 Bear State Fighters

#### **ANSWERS**

Denver Broncos  
 San Francisco Giants  
 Baltimore Orioles  
 Texas Rangers  
 Los Angeles Dodgers  
 Houston Astros  
 Baltimore Ravens  
 Oakland Athletics  
 New York Yankees  
 Oakland Raiders  
 Utah Jazz  
 Memphis Grizzlies  
 Sacramento Kings  
 Phoenix Suns  
 Portland Trailblazers  
 L.A. Clippers  
 Golden State Warriors

*( more... )*

*(See “Consensus Exercise” on page 12)*



*The Alternatives to Violence Project  
As a Grassroots Movement in the  
World, AVP has reached a Point  
Where, no longer an Experiment,  
It Represents The Leading Edge  
of Global Human Healing . . .*

I'm sure many facilitators could use more help in providing workshops. Month after month, year after year...here a little, there a little...and the work of sharing peace goes forward. However, the world around us is growing by leaps and bounds. One does not have to be a doomsdayer in order to wonder if there will be any world left by the time current AVP workshops' growth rate reaches a national or global population saturation.

Do you know of a local or national billboard company? Would the owner consider checking out an AVP workshop? Newspapers and cable television...will they feature a story about local, national or international AVP, or donate space to expose the public to the availability of effective workshops?

Do you own a car or truck? Better yet, do you own a motorhome that sits around most of the year? Painted or magnetic signs applied to vehicles is a low-cost way to promote "AVP awareness," whether the vehicle is driven around town or across the country, or simply parked where it's timely message will be seen. Is the AVP Caravan Tour coming to your town soon? Is there room on your vehicle's rear window for an attractive (perhaps over-sized) "bumper sticker" that includes contact or web site

information.

Today, if I were to survey a random group of 1000 people in a large city anywhere in the country, it is likely none of them would have any idea what AVP is. Don a T-shirt or sweatshirt with an eye-catching logo & slogan and tell them everywhere you go. Always carry flyers or other promotional materials in your car and AVP business cards in your purse or wallet...and look for people to give them to...and places to leave stacks of them. Your tax return check finally came...now is the perfect time to have some quality flyers and posters made up, and to put them in stores all over town.

Do you have other ideas for getting the word out? Write them down. Develop them with variations. Bring them to the national conference in Boston during May 2006 and share them.

In a very real sense, we only have two options in this. AVP can continue as it has successfully done, slowly healing the world (despite the fact that the population is growing faster). Or AVP can take a gentle step back and take a look at how IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO LIVE IN A HEALED WORLD...IN YOUR LIFETIME! ☸

*Doug Couch*



SUGGESTION: Make several versions of shirts, sweatshirts, etc., available at all times to AVP facilitators and groups everywhere. Editor

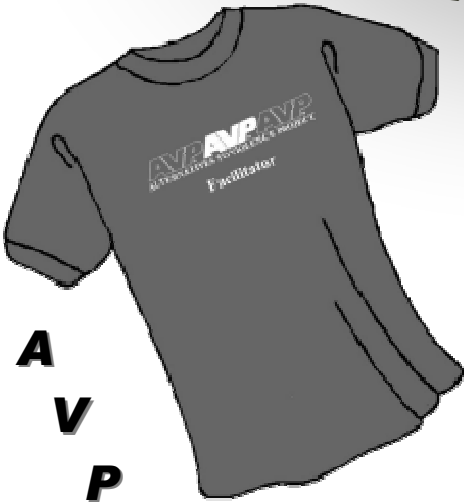
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Emma Lou Comstock, Treasurer  
C C S C\*  
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. . . at Hagerstown, Maryland has provided T-shirts for inside and outside facilitators for a number of years. Recently, Maryland Department of Corrections has gone to uniforms which no longer allows for the use of these burgundy shirts with gold lettering. AVP at Hagerstown has a limited supply of new shirts on hand, suitable for use by facilitators anywhere. Funds will go to purchase white shirts allowed under the new policy. (See above for text printed on front and back.)

Please send check for \$16.00 to the above address. Include your name, address, phone and desired size. **M—L—XL—2XL—3XL** We have one **4XL** left. (Sorry, *no SML* size available.) It would be helpful if you also email your order information to **emmaloudav@aol.com**. ☘

\* C C S C is the nonprofit Community Correctional Services Committee, whose mission is to support educational and personal growth programs at the Maryland Correctional Institution at Hagerstown.

# Welcome to AVP IG 2006

***Registration for the International Gathering is now open!***

**THE DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION HAS BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL**

**30th APRIL 2006**



*Please read . . .*

*“Newsletter Update 1”  
before completing the  
registration form.*



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  3. **Online** at [www.avpboston2006.org](http://www.avpboston2006.org) to register and pay.(no scholarships).
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- ❖ **Questions?** Email Peg Erlanger at [perlanger@rcn.com](mailto:perlanger@rcn.com) or call 617 558-5575

**CONFERENCE INFO AT A GLANCE**

[www.AVPBoston2006.org](http://www.AVPBoston2006.org)

**VISIT US ON THE WEB**

*("Consensus Exercise" from page 7)*

## Football Teams

### CLUES

Carenegie Workers  
 Ohio's Striped Ones  
 Missouri Indians  
 Constitution City Fowl  
 Sky Scrapers Tall People  
 Alamo State's Herders  
 Florida Pirates  
 French Quarters Perfect Ones  
 Confederate Birds  
 Tar Heels' Felions  
 Cheese Eater Workers  
 Motown's Beasts  
 Norseman's State  
 Show Me State Head Butters  
 Bison Tabs  
 Big Apple Airliners  
 Midwest Horse Rustlers  
 Smokey Mountain Giants  
 Sunshine State's Cats  
 Oilman's Identity

### ANSWERS

Pittsburgh Steelers  
 Cincinatti Bengals  
 Kansas City Chiefs  
 Philadelphia Eagles  
 New York Giants  
 Dallas Cowboys  
 Tampa Bay Buccaneers  
 New Orleans Saints  
 Atlanta Falcons  
 Carolina Panthers  
 Green Bay Packers  
 Detroit Lions  
 Minnesota Vikings  
 St. Louis Rams  
 Buffalo Bills  
 New York Jets  
 Indianapolis Colts  
 Tennessee Titans  
 Jacksonville Jaguars  
 Houston Texans

## Baseball Teams

### CLUES

Peach State Redmen  
 California Halo Wearers  
 Lord's Birds  
 Green Monster Footwear  
 Windy City Baby Bears  
 Windy City Stockings  
 Ohio Firemen  
 Land of Lakes Doubles  
 Bay Area Supporters  
 Ruth's Boys  
 Space Needle Sailors  
 Canada's Birds

### ANSWERS

Atlanta Braves  
 Anaheim Angels  
 Baltimore Orioles  
 Boston Red Sox  
 Chicago Cubs  
 Chicago White Sox  
 Cincinatti Reds  
 Minnesota Twins  
 Oakland Athletics  
 New York Yankees  
 Seattle Mariners  
 Toronto Blue Jays



Lone Star Lawmen  
 Missouri's Kings  
 Ohio's Natives  
 Big Apple's Other Boys  
 Cold City Boozers  
 Sun City Rattlers  
 California Evaders  
 Bay Area Big Men  
 Denver's Mountains  
 Sunshine State Fish  
 Blue City Birds  
 Texas Spacemen  
 Brotherly Love Cigars  
 DC's New Borns

Texas Rangers  
 Kansas City Royals  
 Cleveland Indians  
 New York Mets  
 Milwaukee Brewers  
 Arizona Diamondbacks  
 Los Angeles Dodgers  
 San Francisco Giants  
 Colorado Rockies  
 Florida Marlins  
 St. Louis Cardinals  
 Houston Astros  
 Philadelphia Phillies  
 Washington Nationals

### Hockey Teams

#### CLUES

Canadian Syrup  
 New York Cutlet  
 Missouri Muscle  
 Texas Night Lights  
 Georgia Grinders  
 West Coast Jaws  
 Ohio Yankees  
 Angel City's Powerful Fowl  
 Panhandle Cats  
 Satan's Garden  
 Canadian Hot Spot  
 Big Apple Natives  
 Beantown Bears  
 Denver's Snow Slide  
 Tennessee Prey  
 Steeltown Tuxedos  
 Land of Lakes Frenzy  
 Canadian Rough Neck

#### ANSWERS

Toronto Maple Leafs  
 Buffalo Sabres  
 Saint Louis Blues  
 Dallas Stars  
 Atlanta Thrashers  
 San Jose Sharks  
 Columbus Blue Jackets  
 Anaheim Mighty Ducks  
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## Signing on to the AVP-L list

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

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

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

## Signing on to the AVP-L2 list

Richard Krouskop (Rambunctious Rick)  
 Shreveport, Louisiana, USA

Want to share your work with, or thoughts on: restorative justice, prison reform, school violence, the (.....Insert your favorite region here) conflict between (.....side A ) and (....side B), etc.? That's what the AVP-L2 E-mail discussion group is designed for.

On AVP-L2, there are no restrictions: just "anything in which you think other AVP facilitators might be interested."

Subscription to AVP-L2 is automated and done entirely through the AVP/USA website. Be certain you are using a computer with e-mail connected to the e-mail address you wish to use for the list. You will be sending an e-mail to register and your return address must be the e-mail address to which you wish to receive list traffic.

- Go to: [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org)
- Go to the Facilitator's page (click on the

AVP/USA tab)

- Login Name: "member"
  - Login Password: "texashug"
- Sign up for AVP-L2 (and also AVP-L) near

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\* These items can be customized for your local group—  
Contact Alan Taplow for details.

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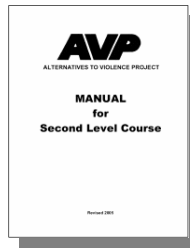
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*The bound manuals are often preferred in prisons—easier to keep pages together.*

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~ 272 Pages ~  
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*Thank You!* to Cynthia MacBain, Grace McGrath, Fred Feucht, Nancy Nothelfer, Elaine Dyer, and Alan Taplow.

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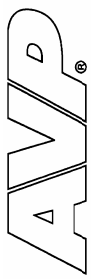
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"the TRANSFORMER" is the Alternatives to Violence Project USA, Inc. newsletter for facilitators and others with an interest in AVP. It is published and mailed quarterly in Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter by AVP USA at Peterborough, New Hampshire. Articles are welcome.

Non-Profit Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
 Peterborough, NH 03458  
 Permit No. 55

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