



Something Positive
A Lifer's Invitation

Remarkable People

Colombia 2006

It All Hurts the Same

Conflict Resolution Queries

2007 National Gathering

AVP Pioneers Survey

Spring

the Transformer

2007

I've Found Something Positive In My Life Behind Bars And It's A.V.P.

submitted by Ann Ward

A.V.P. Alternatives To Violence Project, it's a means of which I've personally found, of great help to me, both inside here, and of which I can take with me on the outside as well.

First off, I, wish to make known, is that avp, is strictly a Volunteer, multi-cultural organization that trained me, by way of, what's call "A Workshop", using skills and dealing with conflict management, that help build a working interaction, to gain insight into ones self, and it turned out to be a new found positive approaching way of handling things, in a non-violent way, showing respect, not only for myself, but my family, and friends too, even the world as we hold, specially behind these walls, by forming a community, of which we are here, building cooperation, and yes even trust, in one form or another.

For I, personally do not believe we as people, and I don't mean just Blacks, or Whites but people of all races, should have to live in a contest violent world, for let's be honest,

there's not anyone, that does not share the capacity for violence in one form or the other, either by ourselves, family, or friend; or stranger, without looking for some way out of it. But by my getting involved in AVP, since around 1997, then under the flag of the once C.F.S. (Community First Step) organization, now under the flag of the PLA (Pennsylvania Lifers' Association) for which I am pleased, it's still going strong, PLA & AVP.

For AVP does teach those who wish to be a part of our community of looking for a change, AVP is able to show how to transform hostility, and destructiveness, into a positive way of life with it's alternatives, from negative to positive cooperation, by helping build a strong community even in this place, that's if you, my brothers wish to volunteer at least one weekend a month to start with a' basic workshop, or at least volunteer to what's known as a gathering which is held on one Wednesday evening every other month, to get a little taste of what AVP has to offer, but it's all volunteer only.

I've also wish to let you our readers know, AVP, is a process of seeking, and sharing, and not just teaching, for I believe that the answer to our problems of how to stop our hostility toward each other, lies buried in the same place as, the questions of why, within ourselves, and all this comes to provide a seeker "friendly" environment of encouragement to pull these solutions from ourselves, and in this case, myself, of which I have on a couple occasions, because we all come with a life time of experiences, and AVP does believe it's valuable, and you'll get to look at most of them, in one form, or the other, building a process of learning from each other.

For some one said "The unexamined life is not worth living," for those who are involved in AVP, do try to make an opportunity.

Just to try to better explain AVP, here's a little of what it has offered, and I learned and added to it with my own life experiences to make myself who may be an inmate like you all on the outside, but on the inside, a God loving, caring, helping, strong, and in my case - A Black Man.

It's taught me:

1. Respect and like for self;
2. To think before reacting;
3. A way for non-violent solution;
4. A caring for others;
5. To expect the best.

And all that is what we of the AVP community call, the Transforming Power Mandala, short (TP), with TP, and a few others such as the following:

6. A willingness to affirm others;
7. Ask questions;
8. Use surprise;
9. Try humor;
10. To seek reconciliation;
11. Accept others as they are;
12. Take a risk to do the right thing;
13. Be patient;
14. Stay calm;
15. Be courageous
16. And in closing just let it be known.

I've learn by experience, and when one, volunteers to get involved, in a positive way, for the better of one self...

For the best way to kill a program such as AVP, is to make or require people to attend it, because AVP mean power builds and seeps up, not trickle down.

Also the main source of one being non-violent is one believing in something bigger than their self, meaning Spiritual Power, and the workshops, do avoid references to sectarian religion, but they do believe it takes more than mere techniques, and skits to defuse violence, it takes what is inherent in us all, and is found in our religious beliefs, from all walks of life, including Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Native American, Hindu, and

even Buddhists, and there are many people from many spiritual paths, and it let's me personally know people from all walks of life are involved in and with AVP, for it truly is a win-win program.

My Brothers this is an opportunity to support one that does, do good things, and over the years I've been involved in AVP working with many special people, in here, and outside guest trainers too, of which I my self am a trainer, called a facilitator, helping myself, by helping others, living by example, conflict management, community building, conflict resolution, and Transforming Power, to day learning, and living as a good person, which helps me to prepare for the years ahead.

Thank you for your time and attention, come check AVP out.

C.J. Williams - *Coolheaded CJ*
 Pennsylvania Lifers Association
 SCI - Huntingdon, Pennsylvania

Bit-By-Bit, We're Getting the Word Out



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor, I am writing this letter to let the A.V.P. world know of some remarkable individuals. My name is Marc Trumble. I am an inmate (facilitator) at Nevada State Prison, Carson City N.V. 4yrs ago, Bill, Donna, Harbert, Ellen, Rita and Rick. Brought this program to the Nevada Prison System, and what they have accomplished here is nothing short of a miracle.

For 4 yr's I have watched the above mentioned people unselfishly give and sacrifice whatever was needed of themselves to keep this program alive and growing inside these walls. And I am truly grateful for what they have accomplished here. As are a lot of inmates. Currently there are 3 inside facilitators, and about a dozen apprentice facilitators. And we are all thankful for what these people have done for us and A.V.P. A.V.P. is a remarkable program, but it is only as remarkable as the people who make it that way, and Bill, Donna, Harbert, Ellen, Rita, and Rick, may be the best A.V.P. has ever seen. Thank you. I would also like to say a very special thank you to Bodacious Bob and the Great Giri.

*Thank you, Marc Trumble
 NSP, Carson City, Nevada*

2006 Colombia Report



In Sincelejo and Montería in the northern part of Colombia, and in Bogotá, our team of four Colombian and two US facilitators, conducted three Advanced and three Training for Facilitators (T4F) workshops.

In Sincelejo, the sixteen participants were mostly from displaced communities. In Montería, the fourteen participants were mostly Catholic community outreach workers or teachers and a few Protestants, including two from Baranquilla, about 100 miles away. This was the first ecumenical activity sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Montería. The twelve participants, in Bogotá, were

mostly lay members of various Protestant churches with various professions in education and social service.

Twenty-two apprentice facilitators from three different cities graduated, and the eight Bogotá participants need only one more day of training to graduate. The four Colombian facilitators who worked with us are committed to continuing AVP workshops and establishing a separate PAV-CoIombia non-governmental organization.

The Sincelejo and Montería workshops were partially funded through a grant to REMPAZ. Some follow-up (Basic



"Team Mango" in Montería

workshops by the new apprentices with mentoring by the experienced facilitators) will be paid for by a World Council of Churches grant. The experienced PAV-Colombia team will combine trips for the paid workshops so that some unpaid ones can also be offered.

The four Colombian facilitators are part of the group trained by Friends Peace Teams in 2003. Each expressed gratitude for the personal help that AVP has given them. One, the coordinator of PAV-Colombia, was especially articulate about this. All four are working part-time or are unemployed, and living with extended families in Bogotá. Two are young men who are conscientious objectors and the women support alternatives to military service, too. The women also work with women's groups in hopes that women can experience the empowerment that AVP offers.

Three of the facilitators are active in their faith communities-Catholic and Protestant-and are excited by AVP's spiritual component. AVP has a tradition of not using religious language or concepts, and some of them were puzzled by this, seeing it as a failure to take advantage of an important aspect of participants' lives. Some participants also complained that the workshops lacked Biblical orientation. In past workshops, participants have been encouraged

to have optional devotional activities outside workshop sessions, and this has generally answered their concerns.

AVP's style of experiential education fits in very well in Colombia. Participants regularly praise it as a better way to learn than the lecture and memorization of their formal education. AVP continues to adapt to the local culture and to offer opportunities for creativity. One Colombian facilitator created a method for choosing the focus topics for the second-level workshop. Small working groups were to come



up with three or fewer focus topics. Each topic was put on a separate large card and taped to the wall. This made it convenient to regroup the topics into categories that were similar. In another activity, the facilitators asked participants to make a web (with string or yam) for a brainstorm in the training for facilitators on what makes a good team. At the end it was clear that everyone contributed to

and was connected to the team and in different ways. The fish bowl was also effective in brainstorming with the quick moving to the chairs for speakers making everyone lively and attentive. These innovative ways of doing typical AVP exercises would be useful in other workshops.

There was lots of humor. In the Broken Cubes, Audrey gave a hint to one of the participants.

This was later referred to by a Colombian facilitator as “another international intervention” which brought a chuckle from everyone. At the end of the Advanced Workshop in Montería, Val and Audrey gave the participants some mangoes as a joke gift. There had been mangoes falling from the trees and they were abundantly available-hardly a gift. (The younger folks on our facilitation team cooked up this plan.) Everyone got a big laugh out of this. At the end of their training for facilitators these folks decided to call themselves Team Mango.

In the training for facilitators in Montería, one of the teams being trained made a creative innovation in their presentation of Transforming Power, the central focus of AVP. Each of the group of trainees explained a piece of the Transforming Power Circle starting with transforming power at the center. There the facilitator made a

circle with took two participants.

Then another facilitator talked about the second level of the circle and drew in enough people to make a full circle outside of the first one. In a similar fashion, an outer circle was made and then the human circles walked in opposite directions as the facilitators talked about how the pieces of the Transforming Power circle work together. It was very powerful. In the feedback to this team it was suggested that big circles with the words of the Transforming Power Circle could be put on the floor to make it even more graphic.

The folks in the workshops had varied occupations. Some were helping their community learn new skills to make money. There were teachers, psychologists, social workers, and pastors (who usually held other jobs as well). Several people were unemployed.

Several of the people in each of the first four workshops had been displaced from their home communities and couldn't go back because of threats of violence. Some have witnessed horrible murders. One moment that had great emotional impact occurred when a woman giving an example of an “I” statement said, “I felt sad when my husband was disappeared because now I will have to raise our daughter alone.” (“I” statements are part of the

AVP Distribution Service WORKSHEET & ORDER FORM (802) 454-4675

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CT	Training for Facilitators Manual....	<input type="checkbox"/> LOOSE LEAF <input type="checkbox"/> BOUND	10.00		
CY	Youth Manual.....		10.00		
CO	Organizing Kit.....		5.00		

THESE THREE MANUALS WILL BE SHIPPED AS BOUND UNLESS LOOSE LEAF IS CHECKED

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TA	Transforming Power - AVP in Action.....		8.50		
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BY	AVP-USA Bylaws & Policy Guide.....		1.00		
DI	AVP Worldwide Contact Directory.....		1.00		
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To access AVP-L discussion on facilitation:
Contact Peter Hoover at PRH4@CORNELL.EDU

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T1	1-Year Subscription to "the Transformer" (4 issues).....	15.00		
T2	2-Year Subscription to "the Transformer" (8 issues).....	25.00		
T3	3-Year Subscription to "the Transformer" (12 issues).....	35.00		
TG	Group Subscription (5 or more 1-year sub's. paid together...cost each)..	10.00		
TI	Inside Facilitators, 1-Year Subscription..... <small>FIRST YEAR FREE THEN SCHOLARSHIP</small>	5.00		
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- **PRIORITY MAIL** (usually 2-3 days):
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 - ✦ flat rate box, up to 10 Advanced or Youth Manuals, or up to 15 Basic Manuals...**8.10**
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To access AVP-L2 for general unrestricted discussion
 AVPUSA.ORG > FACILITATORS LINK(ID=MEMBER/PW=TEXASHU6) > SIGNUP

AVP-L2

LIST ACCESS

communication techniques that are taught in AVP workshops.)

In evaluations, many participants stated that they recognized that peace begins within each one of us. Several people said they learned that the different churches can work for a common cause that isn't in contradiction to their beliefs.

Other comments:

- *“The acknowledgment exercise will enrich me.”*
- *“Part of the marvel of transforming power is to expect the best in others.”*
- *“I feel lighter and can fly freely.”*
- *“I liked the respect and tolerance in the group which was multicultural, intergenerational, and multi-religious.”*
- *“The group helped me with my desire to continue going forward with this work.”*

The participants in the workshops were extremely enthusiastic about “multiplying” the work throughout Colombia as well as in their local communities. We heard, “These workshops will really help my community deal with violence,” and “We can't wait to begin workshops in our communities.” Most participants work with programs that serve poor and/or displaced people who live near big cities. In both Sincelejo and in Montería, the newly trained facilitators set up a meeting later in the summer

to do more specific planning of Basic workshops for their communities and organizations.

The four facilitators with whom we worked are now ready to facilitate workshops at any level, without needing outside help. They and the participants in these workshops are very highly motivated and have lots of talent to continue the work. We feel blessed to have met and worked with such wonderful, dedicated people.

Recommendations

With the AVP program, we can continue to provide counsel, funding, and occasional volunteer facilitators for further work, especially with expansion into areas/regions where multinational teams may be advantageous. We can help facilitate contacts with other Latin American AVP programs and Spanish-speaking facilitators. As PAV-Colombia grows, they hope to open an office and maintain a library of AVP and nonviolence materials, to which we can contribute. We hope to take advantage of the offer of a Friend to make a video of AVP work in Colombia for use within the country as well as in the US. A speaking/ fund-raising tour in North America for one or more of the facilitators is possible. Because of the outreach by the FPT team, PAV-Colombia will try to incorporate participation by members of the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartadó

and of the Friends Meeting of Bogotá (which includes people who work with the Permanent Commission on Human Rights) in AVP workshops.

PAV-Colombia, Justapaz, CAS, and the conscientious objectors' group are all very interested in the trauma healing and reconciliation work being done by FPT's African Great Lakes Initiative, and hope to be able to experience examples of the African training as soon as possible. (AGLI's Healing and Rebuilding Our Communities manual is expected to be available in English by the end of this year.) They also want to expand AVP work with their

constituencies. As a result of our visits, PAV-Colombia has a pending proposal for work with Justapaz and hopes to present a proposal for work with CAS later this year.

The conscientious objectors' group hopes FPT can facilitate connections with international supporters. They have requested help with training in "civil resistance," which includes direct action, an area that standard AVP does not (yet) cover.

We are exploring possibilities of sending a delegation to Colombia to learn more about the work of our partners and to support them in their activities.

“Dear members of the Friends Peace Teams Board and Council,

“On behalf of the AVP Colombian facilitators (Alba L. Arrieta, Alejandro Parra, Edith Guasca and Wilfredo Benitez) we want to thank you for your financial support during all this hard work we did last June and July with Val Liveoak and Audrey Miller’s help. Both of them were of great help for us in our work as AVP facilitators.

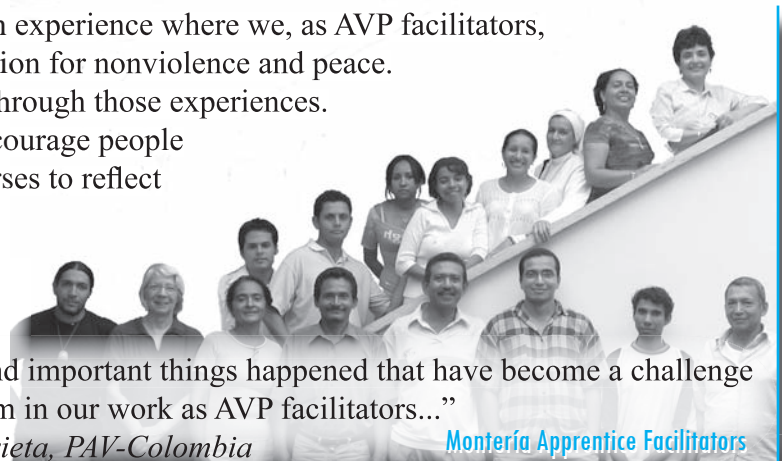
“It was a very rich experience where we, as AVP facilitators, confirmed our option for nonviolence and peace.

We learned a lot through those experiences.

We also could encourage people attending the courses to reflect on their own capacity to be practitioners of peace.

Many touching and important things happened that have become a challenge for us and for them in our work as AVP facilitators...”

– *Alba Luz Arrieta, PAV-Colombia*



Montería Apprentice Facilitators

To the Victims Who Have Suffered It All Hurts the Same

Our mission in AVP is to counter the effort to desensitize the world to violence, by those who would stand on the illusion of the moral high ground. We have to remove violence from the arsenal of problem solving tools because some folks were left with the impression that a disagreement is provocation, and a prelude to violence, and war. We have to remind our brothers and sisters that agreeing to disagree is an acceptable conclusion to a discussion in a world as diverse as the one we live in.

But we focus so much on the violence of crime, that we forget that so often many of our prison inmates, convicted of violence at home, were exposed to and traumatized by, combat training and battle testing abroad. The preface to Claude Thomas's book a "At Hell's Gate: A Soldier's Journey from War to Peace," says it much more eloquently than I:

We all desire happiness—what is good, pleasant, right, permanent, joyful, harmonious, satisfying, and easy. But life often brings frustration,

dissatisfaction, incompleteness, and sorrow. It is this suffering that leads us to violence against ourselves and against others, and coming to terms with suffering is the only way ultimately to end violence and live with greater peace in the world.

We are taught that violence in armed conflicts like war, and the violence of crime, are separate entities. I have seen this as Marine Corp and Navy Veteran. Granting our soldiers, sailors and airmen, a blank check by virtue of a government sponsored commitment of troops, only exacerbates our need to reaffirm the AVP guides to transforming power.

Whether you're a mugger who snatched a old lady's purse in Minneapolis, or you're a Green Beret who shot a teenage boy, playing soldier with a toy gun, in Faluja, Iraq, to the victim's who have suffered, it all hurts the same.

J. Stephen Brown
Stillwater
Bayport, Minnesota

Conference Site: www.AVPTampaBay2007.org

Conflict Resolution Queries from Omaha Correctional Center
December 2006 Advanced Workshop on Conflict Resolution

Submitted by Marian Klostermann, MN

1. How can we tell the difference between a “need” and a “want?”
2. How can a two-party conflict be resolved when the other party is unwilling?
3. Are misunderstandings the cause of all confluence?
4. Why does my pride lead me into so many conflict situations?
5. Does conflict have to rule my life?
6. Do I want to resolve conflicts?
7. How can I care-front without neglecting my own needs? How do I find balance?
8. Does sensitivity get in the way of reality?
9. How can I say what I feel without hurting others?
10. Does conflict generally help me to grow or does it just make me miserable?
11. Does my anger affect the conflict?
12. If conflict resolution is a good thing, why are we are people so quick to end it negatively or violently or with no resolution?
13. When a conflict starts are the people even wanting to or thinking of coming to a common nonviolent resolution?

Picture Sharing Images

Much thanks to Janet Riley and her son for making photos and graphics for exercises so readily available both for quick access and for obtaining quality pictures to work with.

Visit: www.wonderdogprograms.com/avp



“Picture Sharing” images. We have provided Quality Print-On-

An older African-American man after one day in a Basic workshop looked across the room at a young, heavily tattooed (even on his shaven head) white man and said “Until this workshop I would have been afraid to talk to you. Now I know more about you, I feel like we can be friends.” The young man nodded his agreement looking directly at his new compatriot and smiled for the first time in the workshop.

**WELCOME
to the 2007 AVP-USA
National Gathering
"The AVP Family Tree!"**

The local conference committee, lead by Susan and Darrell Hefte, AVPTampaBay, has found a pristine **Florida** setting for our gathering that is secluded, warm, friendly and relaxing amid the natural beauty of "old Florida". The proximity to the Interstate 75, a huge outlet mall, and local attractions – including excellent beaches and fishing, belie the quiet and welcoming location.



**KEYNOTE
SPEAKER**

Jane Hughes Gignoux, MA poses difficult questions such as "How have I lived?" and "How do I deal with life and death issues as an incarcerated person?"

lifedeathbeyond.com



The DaySpring Conference Center opened in 1983. The Episcopal Diocese of Southwest Florida built DaySpring on the north bank of the Manatee River just east of Ellenton, Florida. Today, DaySpring has 19 buildings on its 92-acre campus and features nature trails, tennis, volleyball and basketball courts, two swimming pools and a full scale Ropes Course for team building and leadership training.

PLENARY PRESENTERS

- **Sandy Herskowitz, MSW**
Laughter is the Best Medicine!
- **Christina Bellamy, MA, LMCH & Cecelia Yocum, PhD**
Psychodramatically Speaking
- **Jane Hughes Gignoux, MA**
Difficult Questions About Life
- **Pat Humphries & Sandy O**
emmasrevolution.com
Music to do Peace by

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8411 25th STREET EAST, PARRISH, FLORIDA

THURSDAY MAY 24th - MONDAY MAY 28th

SEND WORKSHOP PROPOSALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

e-Mail to: AVP-TAMPABAY@TAMPABAY.RR.COM

AVP PIONEERS – HISTORICAL SURVEY

1. When/Where: First Basic, Advanced & T4F; or, did you come in under a different format?
 2. How did you get involved & who trained you?
 3. What was your early involvement in workshops?
 4. What involvement did you have beyond the workshops?
 5. Did you have an active local council?
 6. What were the early key important issues and what has been your primary interest in AVP?
 7. Did you get involved with recruiting new participants?
 8. What exercises have had the greatest impact with you?
 9. Which are your favorite exercises to do?
 10. How are you with the team concept of facilitation?
 11. What TP story most impacted you personally and how do you communicate TP?
 12. What has been one of your biggest insights stemming from AVP?
 13. What has been one of your greatest growth areas?
 14. What has been your greatest challenge?
 15. What is your dream for AVP?
 16. What do you see as your legacy with AVP? What would you say is your major contribution locally/nationally/internationally relative to AVP?
 17. Who, in your experience, has made important contributions to AVP, that embody the pioneering spirit? How might we contact this/these person(s)? Or, if no longer with us, would you write a memorial about this person?
- Thank you for your willingness to participate in this historical survey. Alan Taplow has offered to put the responses together in a booklet form available through the AVP Distribution Services. Your responses are eagerly awaited. Comments re questions not included above are also welcome.
- Darrel Hefte, AVP-Tampa Bay*



Cecelia Yocum



Sandy Herskowitz



Pat Humphries & Sandy O

Correspondence or Articles Submission to:

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Subscription Information to:

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Visit us on the web at <http://www.theTransformer.us>



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Errata for Conference Issue 2007:

- 1) The cover incorrectly spells the name of our laughter specialist, Sandy Herskowitz. Apologies, Sandy!
- 2) Incorrect rates for private rooms were given on the Registration Form (page 13). Corrected rates for private rooms are: **All rooms are semi-private. A room taken by one person is considered to be a “private” room, whether or not the room has an attached bathroom. Attached bathrooms are available on a “first-come, first-served” basis...so register early! Private room rates are “\$25 MORE PER NIGHT” than the semi-private room rates.**