



The
TRANSFORMER

Supporting and Celebrating the Facilitators of AVP Workshops

When We Were Young and Now

In This Issue

Reflections on When I was Younger **1**
 Gang Members Change in Sing Sing Support Groups..... **1**
 Mentoring Youth **3**
 Open Letter to Young People.. **3**
 Violence a Disease...and if so can it be cured?..... **4**
 Working as a Team **8**
 Order Form **9**
 Ten Behaviors to Practice..... **10**
 Thank you Alan Taplow **10**
 Art Transformations **11**
 A-Block **11**

Articles for this issue were compiled by the AVP facilitators at Sing Sing Correctional Facility, Ossining, New York

A Publication of AVP/USA.

Reflections on When I was Younger

By "Puma O" Omar Robertson

One of the most important lessons I learned in AVP was to try to resolve conflicts by reaching common ground. For far too many years, my life has been all about me and what I wanted out of life. Too little time was spent on the wants and needs of others.

When I was younger, I would berate my mother if I didn't get the exact toy or food that I wanted, even if I was taking it away from my younger brothers. As I grew older, I started to steal from people to get what I wanted. This behavior is what led me down a destructive road that led to prison.

Today, AVP has provided me with a newfound respect for my family, my community and myself. For the first time in my life, I am able to see beyond what I want. I can put myself into my mother's shoes and see how she had so little to provide for my siblings and me. Reflecting back on my life, I see how bad she had it and how her led to my destructive behavior. The people that I victimized had worked hard to provide for their families, not for me to take it all away from them.

AVP has taught me to seek common ground with other people within my community. AVP and its Transforming Power model has taught me to build community based on honesty, respect and caring. The Reflections Exercise provided me with an opportunity to enhance my self-respect and my respect for others. Life is not all about what I want; we all have wants and needs. By working together, we can achieve peace in our lives.



Gang Members Change in Sing Sing Support Groups

By Bold Bashar. Sayyed Bashar

AVP created the Wednesday evening Support Groups in 2008 to challenge the youth and gang members to seek change mentally and physically instead of targeting and shunning them. The AVP facilitating team invited the gang members and youth to attend our initial Support Group, assuring them of our honesty, trust, non-judgment and understanding.

The Task

Within our Support Groups, everyone listens and earns each other's respect, bringing forth courage and inspiration to share their individual views, wants and desires to better themselves. We focus on communication without pointing a finger at who or what is wrong, which frees all participants to develop a mature understanding of every participant and facilitator's feelings.

Many individuals consider it a difficult task--or simply a waste of time-- to be

Sign up now!
Early Bird Registration - March 26th for 2011
AVP/USA National Gathering in San Francisco, May 27-30
www.avpusaconference.org

The TRANSFORMER

The Transformer is a quarterly publication of the Alternatives to Violence Project of the United States of America. Headquarters and Distribution Service, Subscription:
1050 Selby Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104
Phone: (888) 278-7820
E-mail: avp@avpusa.org
Website: www.avpusa.org

Editorial Coordinator: Pat Hardy
Copy Editor: Joan Cowan
Editorial copy for the newsletter and requests for "Guidelines for Submission" should be e-mailed to avppat@earthlink.net. If no Internet capability, mail to *The Transformer*
P.O. Box 3294
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
Phone: (805) 886-9773

Graphic Design: *Four Winds Graphics*

Subscriptions and address changes:
Contact: Toby Laverty
5202 Foothill Blvd
Oakland CA 94601-5431
510-866-1224
transformer@avpusa.org
Please make checks payable to AVP/USA.
Or got to www.avpusa.org

Subscription Rates:
Green Electronic Edition \$10
Paper Edition:
Prisoners.....\$5/year
All others:
1 year \$15
2 years \$25
3 years \$35
Group rate
Green Electronic Edition ..\$5 ea
Paper Edition..... \$10 ea

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

Back issues may be found at www.thetransformer.us.

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.



Continued from page 1

Gang Members Change...

in a prison environment with a room full of young gang members and affiliates who have or have had violent tendencies. But with the ongoing progress of every Support Group, AVP Sing Sing has proven the doubters wrong again. We challenge the youth--whether they are a gang member or not--to express their feelings in an open and respectful way, which creates a nurturing and sustainable environment that provides growth and development within themselves to carry with them into society.

The Results

We believe this process results in "community building, along with personal growth and development." Within our groups we also focus on discussing "what ifs..." relative to past acts, which touch on issues that have led some of us down destructive paths, which provides us today with better decision-making skills and options for the future. We continue to strive towards overcoming our failure to admit that we have done something wrong. We focus on taking a good look at our lives so we can prevent falling into the abyss of our anger, violent behavior and poor decision making that has, in the past, left us powerless. Our sole focus with youth is to empower them to make better constructive decisions, to be open to their options and to move forward, knowing they can change for the better.

Transformations

Being effective is internal and an individual's foundation. Doing so as a team with a group full of gang affiliates and members has created a positive driving force with AVP—beyond what we originally intended it to be. The Wednesday evening Support Groups started with, "Why is there so much violence?" Today, we can admit that from the beginning of 2008 until the present, AVP Sing Sing can take great pleasure in the transformation of all Support Group members to ex-gang members and up and coming AVP facilitators. Guided by AVP's guiding principles of conduct and Transforming Power, former gang members and affiliates have found their true inner purpose, with an overwhelming desire to give back to society and their communities by challenging others like themselves to become part of the solution. These new youth facilitators also are providing trust, honesty and an attentive ear for those like themselves who come from a dysfunctional environment and need a kindred spirit to show compassion for their grievances or experiences (emotional processing or reflecting).

AVP Sing Sing commends all of the youth who have participated in and supported all of our Wednesday evening Support Groups. We thank them for meeting our challenge, proving the doubters wrong for targeting them. We also thank all of the community volunteers who come to Sing Sing week after week to support our mission and help with the transformation of those who will be returning to the community we all share.

New contact for Transformer subs, address changes, new facilitators

Effective immediately, *Transformer* subscriptions or changes to the National Data Base go to Toby Laverty
5202 Foothill Blvd, Oakland CA 94601-5431
510-866-1224 transformer@avpusa.org

Changes to the National Data Base or addition of new facilitators go to Toby at: data@avpusa.org

Make checks payable to AVP/USA or go to www.avpusa.org

Mentoring Youth

By Lamont Bryant

With an alarming number of youth coming into these prisons, it is imperative that some kind of mechanism is incorporated to assist them in making their transition into prison and, better yet, a transition out of prison. There is a need for older brothers in the facility to "step their game up" and begin mentoring to these young men, living out the old African adage, "It takes a village to raise a child."

The members of the Youth Awareness Program (YAP) have come together hoping to restore cohesiveness within this prison environment. By reaching out to these young men, educating them about their self worth and the worth of life in general, we hope to help young people externalize their humanity. By so doing, we believe we can break the stereotypical assumption that our youth are lost and without emotions or dreams.

I remember when I first came to prison. I was 18 years old, and most of the older cats were doing their own thing. They pretty much did not want anything to do with adolescents. Therefore, we were left to our own devices, which were limited and confined to spinning around the yard aimlessly, with no real sense of direction.

The dudes I hung out with did not have any real aspirations. Our value system was twisted because we did not know any better at that time. We thought we knew everything. As time went on, I began to see things with a new perspective. Things that I once was confused about began to make sense.

Nowadays, I make it my business to reach out to the youth that are entering the prison system by being as accessible as possible and assisting them with any concerns they may have. As a result, we now have a network of young incarcerated men on the come up.

"It's something positive for people like me to mature [meaning, get wiser] as I grow," said John Cruz (21 years old).

Open Letter to Young People

By Rashan Smalls

Peace to my brothers and sisters. Sixteen years ago, at the age of 17, I made a split-second decision, altering the course of my life and the 16-year-old boy I murdered. I destroyed his life and mine as well. Two lives were ruined by a decision I made. He remains dead underground, and I live buried beneath the bars of incarceration. I say buried because, since my arrest and conviction for murder, I have served nearly 15 years of an imposed 25-year sentence. Over the years, I have felt that my prison sentence is a virtual death sentence. The stressing weight of imprisonment constrains not only with stones and metal bars but also through the broken dreams, misguided decisions, lack of self-esteem, soulless politics and misplaced values that have led to my incarceration.

In retrospect, my life demonstrates many of the currently prevailing conditions and circumstances that are causes of incarceration. Like many of you, I have witnessed many things while growing up in my "hood" that negatively shaped my early years and teenage experiences. Family influences seemed to affect me most. In my home, I watched helplessly as my mother struggled with a "crack" addiction and domestic violence abuse. Her pain and suffering became my badge of shame. It became a festering sore for me that just would not heal. It seemed that when she lost her fight with drugs, she had also lost her love for me and, in turn, I seemed to have lost my love for her. I allowed the pain I felt to fuel my anger. Feeling disconnected from her love, I began to perform poorly in school and eventually dropped out. I then hit the streets hard.

My destructive love affair with the streets guided me to a life of crime. Smoking weed, drinking alcohol, robbing and stealing became my way of life. Murder marked my point of no return. I did not know the name of the young black boy I murdered. I never saw his face. I made a decision to take his life because I valued neither his life nor mine. Not having an image of his face in my mind so that my soul could issue forth an apology adds to the pain and remorse I feel for the terrible consequences of my actions. Not knowing what he looked like is part of that festering sore that will not heal and a regret I face daily. *It will forever live as the saddest regret of my life!*

I wish I could start all over again. However, I have learned the hard way that some wishes cannot come true. I have spent my entire adult life behind bars-- far removed from my family, loved ones and simple things I took for granted. I face the daily reality that I could die behind these bars. When I look around this prison, I see mostly young Black and Latino men. Every year, the faces appear younger, and the length of their sentences gets longer. What links most of us--besides skin color--is the way we tragically and misguidedly viewed and thought about ourselves. We failed to see the value of our lives.

I wonder now how things might have been different had I valued life more-- mine and that of the young man whose life I took. I want to pose some serious questions to you, the reader, for you to reflect on. Is it someone or something that gives you value? What do you think about yourself? Do you love yourself?

Today, I love my *mother* and *myself* more than ever! This remains the reason why I now thrive and continue to prepare myself for the day when I can earn my release from prison. To me, self-love and value carry far more importance in my life than the negative opinions others may have about me and that I used to have about myself. My self-esteem motivates me to achieve excellence. Presently, I am a college student working hard towards a Bachelor's degree in Behavioral Science. My goals, especially the educational ones, have helped me to put my life in order. We do not have to experience prison to realize our value. It's important that you see your potential, give love and value to yourself and others and, lastly, believe that anything is possible! Peace!

*This article is part of a workshop at the 2011 AVP National Gathering in San Francisco, May 27-30
www.avpusaconference.org*

Is Violence a Disease... and if so can it be cured ?

An overview of the Public Health Model of violence prevention

By Fred Feucht, AVP New York

Violence may not be spread by a virus or other microbe, but violence can be contagious. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta believes that in many ways, violence is similar to a disease. The CDC even has a separate division that deals with violence as a public health problem.

Emergency room physicians are often on the front lines in dealing with the results of violence. In fact, the number of victims of violence treated in emergency rooms may be as much as four times higher than that in the police reports. Physicians also discover that as soon as they patch up the victims of violence and release them, their first step is often to seek revenge against those who attacked them. The cycle of revenge spreads like a virus.

It is not surprising that physicians are beginning to see violence as a public health problem and are seeking solutions. One of the first people to see this problem was Deborah Prothrow-Stith, MD, an African-American pediatrician working in Boston. She was seeing too many children in her practice who had been beaten, shot or stabbed. She decided that she needed to do something about the youth violence in Boston. As a result, she put together the Boston Youth Program. This has been very successful in making a major reduction in the number of youthful homicides in the City of Boston.

Dr. Prothrow-Stith has become one of the leading, and most articulate spokespersons on the Public Health Model of violence prevention. As a physician, she has some important insights about the psychological, sociological and economic roots of violence and has developed some strategies for dealing with these roots. She has served for two years as the Commissioner of Public Health for the State of Massachusetts and has been a professor in the Harvard School of Public Health. Another advocate of the Public Health Model has been C. Everett Coop, the former Surgeon General

Three Approaches to Violence Prevention

AVP facilitators are all too familiar with the Criminal Justice model of violence prevention and there has been a great deal of interest in AVP circles about the Restorative Justice Model of violence prevention. However, there does not seem to be a great deal of awareness of the Public Health Model in AVP circles. Perhaps the best way to begin to look at the Public Health Model is to compare it to the other current models of violence prevention in the chart on the next page.

As you can see, the Public Health Model is the only approach with prevention as its goal. It seems to be much

Taking AVP to the Streets

In our prison workshops, we have often heard statements such as, "I wish I had taken this program in school. If I had, perhaps I wouldn't be here today."

How do we keep our young people out of the jaws of the prison system?

In Westchester County, New York we are beginning to partner with community organizations in high crime areas such as Yonkers, Mount Vernon and the Bronx to reach out to young people and to help them make the kinds of choices that will keep them out of the prison system.

Understanding the Public Health Model of violence prevention and learning what worked and what didn't work in the Boston Youth Program has provided important insights in our efforts to take AVP to the streets.

more closely related to the AVP program than any of the other models. The Public Health Model provides a conceptual framework for the AVP program and it offers a big picture that includes AVP.

The Public Health Model Seeks to Prevent Violence by Changing Behavior

The evidence shows that violence is a learned behavior. How else can we explain the discrepancy in the homicide rates between the US and other countries? The homicide rate in the US in 2009 was 5.0 per 100,000. This was nearly 350% higher than Canada or the United Kingdom with rates of 1.4 per 100,000 and 500% higher than Ireland with a homicide rate of .9 per 100,000. Perhaps the "hot-headed" Irish have learned to be less violent or Americans have learned to be more violent. Physicians and public health professionals believe that violent behavior can be changed just as other behavior problems such as tobacco use have been changed.

Although much of the focus of violence prevention has been about gangs and drugs, and there is a great deal of fear about violence to strangers, the facts are:

- In 60% of homicides, the victim and the offender know each other.
- Approximately 25% of homicides are among family members.

Perhaps our friends are more dangerous than strangers and conflicts between friends and family members are more likely to lead to violence. The public health approach focuses on these relationships between people who know each other since they represent the majority of homicides, rather than random incidents of violence. We know from our prison work that this is true.

	Criminal Justice Model	Restorative Justice Model	Public Health Model
Parties Involved	Perpetrator and the State	Victim, Offender and the Community	Families, Churches, Schools and Community
Task	Assign Blame and Guilt	Accept Responsibility	No Blame – Social Change
Goal	Punishment	Healing	Prevention
Timing	Reactive – after offense	Reactive – after offense	Proactive
Results	Does not deter violence	Reduces repeat offenses and recidivism	Reduces violence

The Five A's

Adolescents
Alcohol
Arguments
Anger
+ Armed

Homicide

The Public Health Model seeks to remove some of these causes of violence

Homicides are usually the result of human interactions that have failed. It has been said that, "Violence begins when communication ends." Most of the 15,241 homicides in the US in 2009 were the result of communication failures. Some of the ingredients that need to be changed to

stop violence are shown in "The Five A's."

The AVP program is designed to help people improve their communication skills and develop positive human interactions. AVP provides powerful tools to stop the cycle of violence. This is what Transforming Power is all about.

The Public Health Model Seeks to Help with the Adolescent Development Problems of Teenagers

We all lived through the emotional rollercoaster of our teenage years and probably found that it was one of the most difficult periods in our lives. The public health approach understands that normal adolescent development involves major emotional changes that can put teenagers at risk for violence. It is not just teenagers who are poor, live in the inner city, are abused, black or labeled "juvenile delinquents." All teenagers are vulnerable. The public health approach has identified seven common psychological factors that can lead to violence.

The Seven Problems

1. Brain Development - We now know that as the brain

develops in children and young people, everything is wired to everything else and the brain tends to be disorganized. It is not until the age of 25 that the unused synapses atrophy and the brain becomes much better organized. It's no wonder that kids are "wired." ADHD is a common problem and other learning disabilities are related to brain development.

2. Moral Development – As defined by Kohlberg, the first steps in moral development include:

Stage I – The "I Want" phase is driven by desires and this can lead to impulsiveness. Instead of an inner sense of right and wrong, choices are based on outside authorities and fear of punishment.

Stage II – The "Fairness" phase. No one has a greater sense of fairness than an eight-year-old boy. If my sister gets an ice cream cone, it is "fair" that I should get one too. If Johnny gets a bike, it is "fair" that I get one too. If Sammy hits me, it is "fair" that I hit him back. If someone "pops" my friend, it is "fair" for me to "pop" him. Fairness can easily be interpreted as revenge.

3. Sexual Development - As hormones change the body physically they also change the body emotionally. Testosterone leads to sexual desires and may also lead to aggressiveness. This is often expressed in the "macho" image.

4. Adolescent Identity Crisis We know from Freud, as the adolescent begins to separate from the family, think for him or herself, and become more independent, it is natural for the teenager to rebel from the rules and authority of the parents. This may also lead to rebelliousness against society.

5. Adolescent Self-Centeredness – Adolescents normally become very concerned with their own image and feelings and needs. Often they fail to understand the feelings of others. We know that often adolescents can be cruel. This can be expressed as a lack of empathy.

6. No Sense of Mortality – Piaget points out that adolescents have a sense of uniqueness and invincibility. Because of this sense of invincibility, teenagers normally lack a sense of their own mortality and consequently may indulge in risky and dangerous behavior

7. Dealing with Prejudice/Racism – Deborah Prothrow-Stith points out that African-American youth are

The Seven Problems



How can AVP assist teenagers with these problems?

often subject to racism and that the anger about racism can tip the already precarious emotional balance to violence.

All of these factors in normal adolescent development can easily lead to violent behavior. In our prison program we have all seen the results of these seven problems and the thousands and thousands of young people who have been caught in the jaws of the prison system. How do we keep young people from wasting their lives in jail?

Suggested Solutions

The adolescent stages of the public health model can provide a conceptual framework for the AVP program. AVP exercises already provide many tools to help teenagers deal with their adolescent development struggles. For example, the Manly Awareness Workshop focuses on the macho issues, the Bias Awareness Workshop focuses on racism and the Anger Management Workshop can be especially useful in helping young people understand their anger. Areas for additional program development may be risk taking and moral values. For example, there are some wonderful moral dilemma exercises based on Kohlberg used in the Aggression Replacement Training (ART) program that might be adapted to AVP.

The Public Health Model Seeks to Deal With the Underlying Causes of Violence

In addition to personal changes, the public health approach works to change the environmental problems in the world in which many teenagers live. This includes providing programs in the following areas:

- Poverty – Access to Social Services
- Parenting – Parenting Programs
- Drugs – Drug Treatment Programs
- Guns – Gun Buyback Programs
- Gangs – Alternative Youth Programs

The public health approach also involves providing positive alternatives to gang membership.

Suggested Solutions

AVP	→	Partnerships
Light & Livelies Experiential Exercises	→	Team Sports, Athletic Training
Moral Dilemma Exercises	→	Churches, Mosques, Synagogues
Forgiveness Exercises	→	ER Interventions
Manly & Womanly Awareness Workshops	→	Boys & Girls Clubs
Who Am I, Lifelines	→	Big Brothers Mentoring
Empathy Exercises	→	Non-Violent Communication (NVC)
Crossover Exercise	→	Safety Education
Anger Management Workshop	→	Aggression Replacement Training (ART)
Bias Awareness Workshop Stereotyping Exercises Masks, Dots, etc.		

The FBI estimates that there may be one million gang members in the US and 20,000 different gangs that may or may not be affiliated with larger gang families such as the Crips, Bloods, Latin Kings, MS13, etc.

However, 95% of adolescents are not gang members.

Young people may be attracted gangs because they are looking for a sense of family, belonging, protection, and structure. And gangs are a problem in most of our prisons.

A former gang member at Sing Sing said the following, "I was one of the 13 founders of the Bloods in New York City. A new gang member may be looking for a sense of family and protection. However, from the point of view of the gang leader, it is like a chess game. A new gang member is only a pawn. Any good chess player will always be willing to sacrifice a pawn to capture a higher piece."

Is there a way that the AVP program can provide an alternative to gang membership?

For example, Rev. Lee Trollinger, a community leader in Westchester County, has run a youth program for a number of years for 20 young men between 13 and 17 years old. They are mostly African American and Hispanic youth. He has created a unique program that is an alternative to gangs. This is a youth "Fraternity" that has many of the features of gang membership including colors, secret rules, etc. but is based on positive values and goals rather than negative values. This was based on the model of Lee Trollinger's fraternity at a Black College in Atlanta. AVP workshops are being provided as part of the training for Rev. Trollinger's group.

Sports and athletic programs also provide a positive alternative to gang membership. Team sports involve social bonding, frequently with racially integrated teams, and young people who are "in training" are much less attracted to tobacco, drugs or alcohol.

Types of Gangs

Scavenger Gangs The least organized type of gang. They tend to be pickup gangs that attract low achievers and drop-outs. Leadership may change frequently. Sometimes scavenger gangs evolve into Territorial Gangs.

Territorial Gangs These gangs are about "turf" and defending their territory. They are also known as "fighting" gangs. They are highly organized with initiation ceremonies, rules, and rituals. Frequently members are identified with similar tattoos, clothing, sneakers or colors. Territorial gangs are about respect. Any disrespect is a cause for violence and members are expected to "dis" members of other gangs. Some territorial gangs may be in the drug business. Gangs provide their members with an identity and the feeling that they are "someone."

Corporate Gangs Corporate gangs are in criminal enterprises designed to make money. In contrast to territorial gangs, they thrive in secrecy and their members try to be as inconspicuous as possible. They avoid gang colors and their hierarchy is often hidden from the members. Their business may involve drugs, car theft, extortion and other criminal activities. They can be very violent. The Asian Gangs and Latin American Gangs like MS13 fit into this category.

Partnerships at all three levels were a key element in the successful violence prevention program in Boston Youth Program organized by Deborah Prothrow-Stith. Some of the important partnerships were with:

- Public Service Advertising Campaign
- Emergency Room Intervention with assault victims
- South Boston Boys and Girls Club
- Gang Peace Agreement
- Teens Against Gang Violence
- Citizens for Safety
- Ten Point Coalition of Black Clergy
- Community Policing Program in Boston
- Police Strike Force
- Public Schools
- City Hall

Although it would seem that the public school system and the city government would be the first to support the program, they were the hardest doors to open. The program started with a grass-roots movement. And only when the grass-roots movement was successful were the schools and city hall willing to listen.

An important part of the program was hiring two community organizers, one white for South Boston and the other black for Dorchester. The two community organizers working as a team, to put together a coalition of community organizations to solve the problem.

Before the Boston Program, there was an average of one youth homicide per month in Boston. After the program there were no youth homicides for a two-year period and violence never returned to the former level. The police commissioner said the success was due to the new community policing program. Bill Clinton showed up in Boston and said it was due to the federal anti-crime funding. Deborah Prothrow-Stith it was really the result of a ten-year program that involved everyone in the effort.

If we wish to take the AVP program to the streets, we will need to network and partner with community organizations to create a comprehensive program. The Boston Model is a blueprint for success.

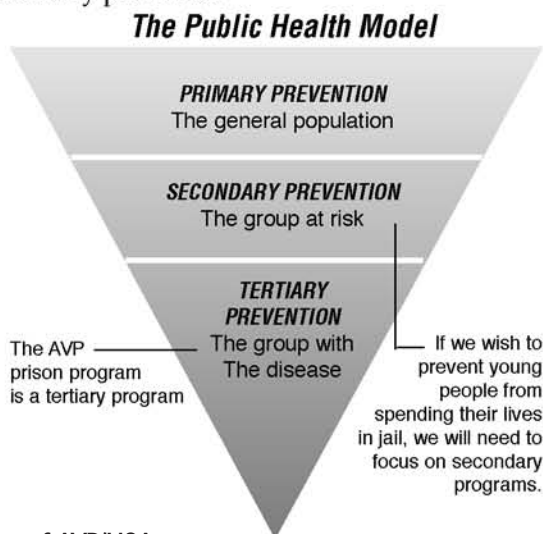
How can we apply the Public Health Model to the AVP Program?

To learn more about the Public Health Model and the emotional, psychological and sociological roots of violence, please read "Deadly Consequences" by Deborah Prothrow-Stith. I think that every AVP facilitator working in the prison or the community will find this book helpful. AVP is listed as one of the resources for conflict resolution in the back of the book.

To learn more about the successful Boston Youth Program and the blueprint of how it worked, please read "Murder is No Accident" by Deborah Prothrow-Stith, especially chapters 10 and 11 that describe what worked and what didn't work in Boston. I think that any AVP facilitator who works with youth in the community will find this book helpful.

The Public Health Model uses a Multi-Level Approach

The public health disease prevention strategies are based on a three level approach. Primary prevention may include radio and TV publicity for the general public. Secondary prevention may include drug treatment programs for youth at risk and emergency room revenge intervention programs for victims of violence. Most of the AVP program is Tertiary prevention that is focused on prison inmates with a history of violence. If we wish to keep young people out of the jaws of the prison system we will need to take AVP to the streets and begin to focus on secondary prevention



Working as a Team

By Cynthia MacBain, Sing Sing (Revised 2011 by Relaxed Robert Rose)



The AVP Basic Manual provides directions for team building, for developing an agenda for a workshop and for leading specific exercises. Our goal here at Sing Sing does not deal with the “why.”

All of the written directions are guidelines – structures that will provide an “anchor” we can use to start from as we each develop our individual styles. The complicating factor is that as we begin to develop our individual style, we have to remain conscious that we will be working ALWAYS as a member of a team. When we deviate from the structure of an exercise that the manual provides, we need to share our new approach with our team so they do not think you simply are confused about directions and step in to “help” and end up confusing the participants.

We are NEVER leading an exercise alone; you may be giving the directions and have “center stage.” But you are never alone. So, how does a team always remain a team? Not by just NOT getting in each other’s way, but actually by supporting and aiding the team member leading a specific exercise, rap or decision

We have discovered that the way the team makes decisions BEFORE you start the workshop is important, so we strive to incorporate the following into our team-building process:

1. Together, the team develops the overall theme or goal of the Basic Workshop: (See Manual- Agenda section)
2. Together, the team develops themes for each session. Themes for these sessions are sequential “steps” toward the goals, theme or objective of the whole workshop.
3. Together, the team chooses exercises (learning experiences) which will help the participants achieve awareness and understanding of the themes of each session.

What this all means is that the members of the team will be able to grasp the following:

- a. What we are doing
- b. Why we are doing it
- c. How we are doing it

Some “rules” that help the process along:

1. Post the themes of the entire workshop. Go over them with the participants so that the participants can grasp clearly where we are headed and why the answers aren’t coming in the first session but will emerge gradually.
2. Refer to that outline of themes as the team prepares the specific exercises for each session. When we include an exercise, the team and the lead facilitator must know what the participants are supposed to get out of it, and the discussion questions we put forth after the exercise is concluded should be designed to draw that understanding out of the participants.

Once our team has decided on the exercises for a particular session and we have worked together to revise/adapt them for a specific “session,” we decide who is to facilitate which exercise. As a facilitator of a specific exercise, he or she is not only responsible for knowing the what, why and how of the exercise but also for working it out with the other team members as to what part(s) they play during the exercise they are leading.

3. Decide what help is needed from the other members of the team. Do we need someone to:
 - a. Take part in the exercise so that each participant has a partner?
 - b. Sit as observer of one of the small groups working on a task?
 - c. Sit next to someone who has trouble following directions or staying on task?
 - d. Be prepared with some “leading” comment? (For example, when brainstorming what violence is and participants seem to be naming only physical violence, to ask if violence can ever be other than physical.)
 - e. Pass out pencils, record comments on a posted sheet of paper?
 - f. Keep track of time and signal you when the discussion should be brought to a close?

Remember: No member of the team is ever “on vacation” at any time during a workshop. Everyone is responsible for the group at all times. One person may be center stage while giving directions, but all of the other members of the team are constantly alert, ready to step in (with a question, not a correction, if possible). If a lead facilitator is giving directions and fumbles or forgets an important part during the exercise, be “tuned in” to what is happening in the process of the exercise and the discussion afterwards. Cynthia MacBain recalls that being “tuned in” was brought home to her in a lesson she will never forget that was brought to her attention by a participant who eventually became the Coordinator for AVP facilitators at Sing Sing. I had noticed that first day that there were a few men who seemed to be competing with one another by using “big words” during discussions. I also noticed the second day that three of the Spanish-dominant participants had brought Spanish-English dictionaries. What I hadn’t done was “put two and two together.” This facilitator approached me during the break that second morning and asked to speak with me. He asked me if I had noticed the dictionaries. Then he explained to me that the Spanish-dominant participants had brought them because they were feeling intimidated during discussions by the men who were using vocabulary they could not understand.

Our team should have been more alert—not to what was being said but to what was being unsaid. We were able to correct the situation, thanks to a sensitive participant.

Unless a team member is specifically assigned the task of becoming a participant, he or she should never act as a participant. We DON’T provide answers; we provide leading questions that will stimulate thought so that the answers come from the participants.

We DON’T become involved in the topic being discussed so that we lose sight of our responsibilities as facilitators: to hear what is coming out of the group discussion and be prepared with questions, to observe who is participating and who is not and to watch the time and communicate to the facilitator leading the discussion if it needs closure.

REMEMBER! Don’t hesitate to close a discussion while it is still lively. You can ALWAYS come back to it. If there are unresolved issues, make a point of writing them in question form on the “Unanswered Questions” sheet.





Distribution Service

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

Order Form - For AVP FACILITATORS 12-26-2010

Core Publications	Price	Qty	Total
CB Basic	7.50		
CA Advanced	12.00		
CT Training for Trainers	10.00		
CY Youth	10.00		
CO Organizing Kit 2010 edition	10.00		

Spanish Manuals (Translated by PAV Mexico)	Price	Qty	Total
SB Basic	15.00		
SA Advanced	20.00		
ST Training for Facilitators	10.00		

Visual Presentations	Price	Qty	Total
VO Original Video including <i>Belly of the Beast</i> 63 Min. - Available only in VHS	10.00		
VM Welcome to AVP - Produced by FNVW) 28 Min - ___DVD-R, ___VHS	16.00		
VA Another Way - Produced in Australia 58 Min - ___DVD-R, ___VHS	16.00		
VP Picture Sharing CD (190 Pictures for use in Picture Sharing Exercise)	10.00		
VL 25 to Life _DVD _stories for 6 former NY inmates for use in youth programs.	10.00		

AVP Evaluations	Price	Qty	Total
ED Delaware/Sloane Study	2.50		
EZ New Zealand Evaluation	5.00		
ER Rwanda Report	2.00		

Other Items	Price	Qty	Total
HI HIPP Manual 4 th Ed. (Published by AFSC)	30.00		
TA Transforming Power - AVP in Action	8.50		
TP Transforming Power for Peace (Apsey)	5.00		
LBr Little Book of Restorative Justice (Zehr)	4.95		
lbp Little Book of RJ for People in Prison	4.95		
HT How to Do Good after Prison	8.50		
WS Walking Softly in an Alien World	4.00		
BU Building a Home for the Heart (New)	16.00		
CI Peacemaking Circles and Youth (New)	19.00		
PIN AVP lapel pins pack of 10 @ \$2.00/pin	20.00		

Postpaid Pamphlets	Price	Qty	Total
PH Nonviolence & Community (Pendle Hill)	3.00		
BP AVP-Overview & Background Pamphlet	1.00		
BY AVP-USA By-Laws & Policy Guide	1.00		
DI AVP Worldwide Contact Directory	1.00		
RH Restorative Justice Pamphlet	1.00		

The Transformer - Quarterly Newsletter	Price	Qty	Total
T1 1 Year Subscription (4 Issues)	15.00		
T2 2 Year Subscription (8 Issues)	25.00		
T3 3 Year Subscription (12 Issues)	35.00		
TG Group Subscription (5 or more 1 year Subscriptions at the same time) Each	= 10.00		
Electronic Subscription (saves paper) e-mail address _____ @ _____	Check here (____)		

TI Incarcerated Inmates only: Per Year = 5.00

Note: No shipping charge for the Transformer

Shipping & Handling - ___Media Mail, ___Priority Mail
See Next Column for Rates

Total Order = _____

New Item !! AVP lapel PINS

\$2.00 each in orders of 10 pins minimum. Post Paid



3/4" x 1/3"

Shipping & Handling

Priority Mail - usually takes from 2 to 3 days
\$4.90 for first 2 items in flat rate envelope
\$10.70 for flat rate box holding up to 10 Advanced,
Youth Manuals, HIPP Manuals
or up to 15 Basic or T4F Manuals.
Check with Distribution Service
for rates on other quantities

Media Mail - usually takes from 5 to 8 days

\$2.85 for first item.

\$.75 for each additional item.

These are average rates and depending upon the weight of each item may be slightly higher or lower than the postage on the package. If you overpay by more than \$1.00, you will receive a credit against your next order. If you underpay by more than \$1.00, will ask you to send in the difference.

Please contact AVP Distribution Service for shipping costs outside the USA or for quantities in excess of 8 manuals to enable us to develop most cost-effective way to ship to you.

Please Print Clearly

Ship by: _____ Priority Mail _____ Media Mail

Payment: _____ Check or Money Order
_____ Visa _____ Mastercard

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: ____/____/____

Name as it Appears on card: _____

Phone #: _____

E-Mail: _____

Ship to: Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Make checks payable to: AVP/USA
Send to: AVP/USA Distribution Service
ATT: Terry/Joann
1050 Selby Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104

Ten behaviors to practice after completing an AVP workshop

By Relaxed Robert Rose

After completing an AVP workshop, all participants are invited to participate in our weekly support groups (Multigenerational and Fatherhood), led by members of the facilitating teams and community volunteers. AVP Sing Sing believes that when an individual completes a workshop, we don't want them to be left without an opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills in Transforming Power. Therefore, we offer the following Ten Behaviors as help along the way.

BE RESPECTFUL. Remember that you are a man, and men carry themselves respectfully. Saying "excuse me," "please" and "thank you" can yield significant results. Respectful conduct can open many doors as well as close the doors to potentially negative situations. Respect breeds respect. Establish a reputation as a respectful individual, and others will respect you.

Remember to respect and care about others.

CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS WISELY. Association brings assimilation. We tend to adopt the behaviors of the people we frequently associate with. Moreover, people judge us by the company we keep. If your friends are grimy and unscrupulous, people will think you are also. *Remember to make friends who will support you and support the best in them.*

READ, READ, READ. Reading is an enjoyable way to pass the time. It is also a way of escaping to another world while expanding your mind. Read everything that you can--novels, magazines, newspapers, non-fiction books, inspirational books. Everything! Feed your mind with information and let it expand. *Remember to risk changing yourself.*

WORK THE BODY. Establish a workout regime that will keep you fit.. Good health is essential to long life, so be conscious and careful about your health. Working out is a constructive way to reduce stress and relieve tension. When you're stressed or someone else hits your vein (pushes your buttons), work it out by exercising. *Remember to pause and give yourself time, before reacting. It will open you to Transforming Power.*

PURSU E FORMAL EDUCATION. Education is what will secure your future. Learn a vocational trade. Obtain a GED or college degree. Take advantage of your time in ways that will benefit you upon release. Don't count time; make time count. *Remember not to rely on weapons, drugs or alcohol. They weaken you (us).*

STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR FAMILY (or at least the outside world). Maintaining a link with the outside world is crucial when doing time. There is no connection more important than the one you have with your family. Usually, they are your greatest supporters and have your best interest in mind. They will be the bedrock of your sanity and a beacon during your darkest hours. You will not be in prison forever; one day you will return home to them. Make sure you maintain a strong bond with them. *Remember to be willing to suffer for what is important.*

DISCIPLINE YOURSELF. You are your own master; you can gain mastery over yourself. Develop self-control so you are in charge of your actions. Discipline is developed by consistently practicing. Practice ridding yourself of bad habits and implementing good ones. Establish a sense of control over yourself so no one will be able to push your buttons. *Remember to be patient and persistent.*

SET REALISTIC SHORT- AND LONG-TERM GOALS. Nothing successful can be achieved without having a clearly defined goal and a plan to achieve it. Set a few short-term goals that pave the way toward a long-term goal. Then develop a plan to achieve the goal. Make sure your short-term goals are ones you can accomplish and build on. *Remember to expect the best.*

STAY OFF THE GATE. Conversation on the gate is an invitation to trouble. There is a time and place for conversing; the gate is not one of them! Learn when to be quiet and when to speak. What you say on the gate becomes public knowledge. Keep your business to yourself and stay out of other people's business. *Remember to listen before making judgments, trusting your inner sense of what's needed.*

CONDUCT DAILY INTROSPECTION. Assess the things you have done throughout each day. Commend yourself for the positive things as that builds self-esteem and work on things that build your character. If you have offended or done an injustice to someone, apologize and make amends. If you have done a good deed or helped someone silently, praise yourself and be humble. Daily introspection will keep you focused and help you develop into all you can be.

Remember to build your own self-respect.

Thank you, Alan Taplow

Many, many people put hundreds of thousands of hours into AVP around the world. Alan Taplow is more than just one of many. Alan stands out...for his commitment to whatever he takes on, for his skill and knowledge of whatever he is doing and for his ability to look at each situation through the lens of experience.

Alan started out as a dedicated New Jersey facilitator. When closing the National Office in Houston AVP/USA desperately needed someone who could take over the AVP Distribution Center. For eight years he became "the man," eventually phasing out from facilitating. From developing systems in order to efficiently deliver manuals to laying them out after committee work was done—we could always count on Alan. He has the knack of knowing when to leave, while people still love him. Giving plenty of notice, Alan's systems were passed on to the Minnesota pair of Joann Perry and Terry Kayser. Alan then took over the AVP database, the AVP-L online discussion hosting and Transformer subscriptions.

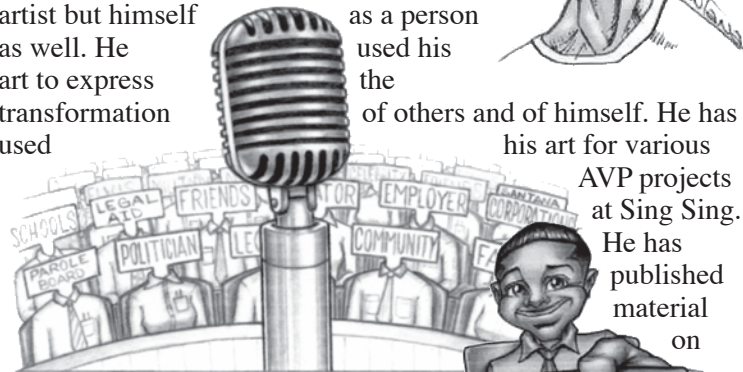
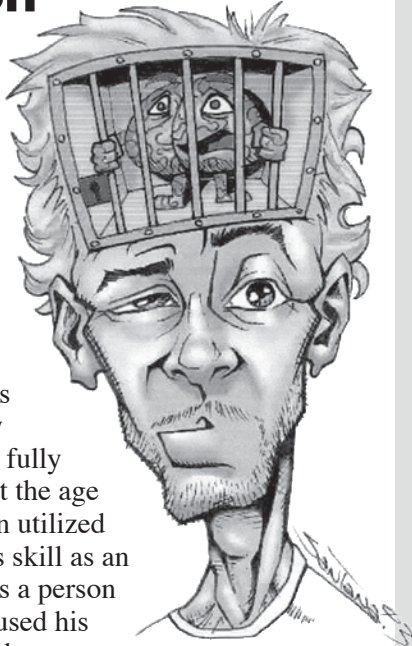
Alan for many years has been the "institutional memory" for AVP—always there for facilitators from around the world who asked questions, the answer to which few had. Always there, always willing and able to help—an invaluable resource for us all. Now he is moving on again. After making his refinements, Alan is passing his latest roles to Toby Laverty in California.

Thank you, Awesome Alan, for the thousands of hours you have given and the lives you have touched while making AVP/USA what it is today.

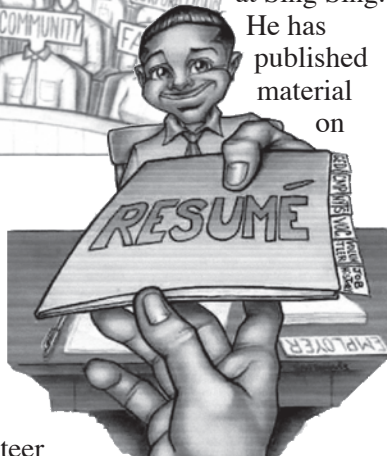
Transformation through Art

By Germain Santana

Germain Santana is a self-taught illustration artist of over 17 years, born and raised in New York City, Bronx. Initially learning to draw from comic books, he moved to drawing from life, then from his imagination. Though he began to develop his skill as an illustrator at an early age, his ability did not begin to fully mature until his incarceration at the age of 19. While in prison, Germain utilized his time to develop not only his skill as an artist but himself as a person as well. He used his art to express transformation used



websites in magazines, on novel covers, CD covers and prison newsletters, all while earning himself a GED, an Associates Degree in Liberal Arts, a Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science and a host of other educational and volunteer program certificates. Germain was



paroled in 2010; he will work as an illustrator for anti-violence projects in his community. e-mail: samuelsantana@optonline.net



A-Block

By Larry Costa

My dwelling is crowded

But well organized
With learning experiences
That allow me to ride
The wings of time
As I travel to and fro
Expanding
My understanding
As I gather more info
About times past
And about times that be
See, I've learned many things
About the world around me...

Like how I really feel

Living in this hell
It's disrupted my senses
Can you hear me yell?
Silently
As I move about
See it in my eyes?
See it in my pout?

I'm yelling
'Cause living in here is
Painful to me
Open your nose,
Your ears,
Wanna see?

Traversing this valley
Shadowed by death
Visions of cemeteries
Plague me
Coffins sacked
Four levels high
Over 600
Positioned vertically
Lids removed
Replaced by bars
Open for all to see
Ways in which the dead
May live
In this elevated cemetery

Assaulted by smells
Of mass confinement.....

Just think
Sour clothes that reek
Mix that with stinking feet
Add cages with odors
That seep through sheets
And underarms of
Sweaty men gone dry
Plus breath that smacks me
As I walk by

And I can't forget
How sick I get
When 400 men sit
And s#&t
At the same time
Okay, maybe it's just in
My mind.

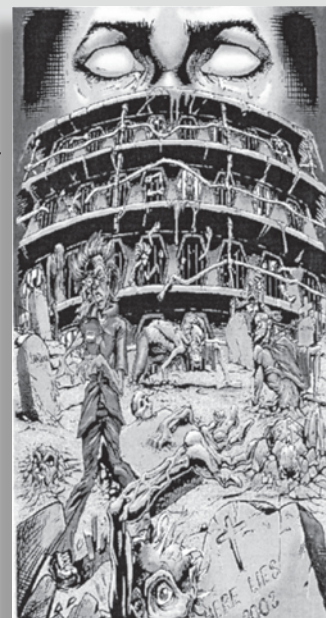
But it's always
the time
My keepers
Count the
lines...

Of over 600 men
For whatever sin
Boxed and
housed
In this devil's
den

It's driving me
crazy
There is no
doubt
At times
I just want to
scream
And shout

But I laugh out loud
To conceal the pain
Joke and play
Like it's all a game
Trying my best
To ignore the change
But the end result is
I'll never be the same

I guess that's life
For the living dead
Drowning in silent tears
I can't shed
Just enduring the sorrow
When the moon comes out
As it shatters the silence
In my head



AVP

The Transformer, AVP-USA, Inc.
5202 Foothill Blvd
Oakland CA 94601

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 222
BARRE VT

Sign up now!
Deadline for Early Bird
Registration - March 26
for 2011 AVP/USA
National Gathering
in San Francisco, May 27-30
www.avpusaconference.org

MOVING FORWARD!

Explore "new media" that can work for your local group
(Facebook, Skype, VolunteerMatch, Wiki)
(Bring your laptop)

Find out how to grow your community workshops
and volunteers

Discover more about yourself as an AVP facilitator,
open up to diversity

Enjoy San Francisco, just a subway ride away..

Sign up now for 2011AVP/USA National Gathering in San
Francisco, May 27-30, www.avpusaconference.org