



The

TRANSFORMER

Supporting and Celebrating the Facilitators of AVP Workshops

Increasing Diversity in Community Workshops

Part 1

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Involving Former Prison Residents On Teams

When I took my Basic Workshop full of eager white, mature, uptight Quakers, I did not get what this was all about. In fact, I would have left it at that had I not been asked to facilitate in prison. You know the story; then I was converted.

So I stayed away from community workshops, thinking they were a lost cause. But, since we need more people to go into prison to do the “real” workshops and I was distressed at the lily-white, upper-middle-income look of those of us “going in,” I started recruiting more widely for people of color, people who are low income--in general, people who didn’t look like my fellow Quakers (or Unitarians or Methodists for that matter). If we are serious about diversifying the faces in community workshops, we need only look to those who are returning to our communities from prison.

We have worked consciously at involving formerly incarcerated persons as well as people of color to facilitate on as many community workshop teams as possible and trying to pay stipends of \$100-120/day. Even those who are in town need help for expenses and to be able to either take time off from work or job hunting. Not all but some do need stipends; sometimes it is merely to afford transportation. We also have started paying \$50/day stipends to at-risk, low-income youth on our teams.

The advantage of having people from outside one’s “culture” is what has made it possible for California to grow and keep our community workshops vibrant and open to new ideas without

moving away from the core principles of AVP.

More and more we see local groups reaching into communities they wouldn’t normally access, primarily because we have encouraged this diversity throughout the state. Having someone on each team who is formerly incarcerated is a part of our advocacy for those who are in or have been in prison. If citizens see the parolee as a human being who is bright, capable and eager to contribute to the community, we become advocates for this often-unappreciated class of citizens who

want to return to our society.

We have a responsibility to communicate the humanity of those who have served their time.

In addition to formerly incarcerated individuals on our facilitation teams, some are staff of the local rescue mission or those who work

with local youth, whom we recruit to take the workshop and who, at some point, become “sold” on AVP.

The other benefit we have learned is that when we have people who have been formerly incarcerated stay in the homes of non-AVP people in the area, more awareness of their humanity happens.

This year, through the very hard work of local facilitators, our community workshops are taking off. There has been a 137% increase in the number of workshops held. Of course, not every



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

Back issues may be found at www.thetransformer.us

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Continued from page 1 Involving Former ...

scheduled workshop "goes" or is full, but we have more people to contact for the next one.

If you seek diversity, you will find that community workshops are as powerful as prison workshops; I guarantee it.

Present Pat, AVP/California

How do you find paroled AVP facilitators?

Though we cannot contact parolees until they contact us, these "returning citizens" find us through a couple of means.

Every graduate of a workshop receives a business card with our 800 number and website on one side and the Guides to Transforming Power on the other.

Every certificate also has this contact information on it.

The toll-free number is an answering service through RingCentral.com, which has the option of linking to multiple areas (e.g., LA--push 1, San Francisco--push 2). The assigned answerers receive emails with the voice message; then they return the call. We create the message for RingCentral.

Tips on finding workshop participants

By Katherine Youngmeister

Always give; rarely ask: "I'm a volunteer with the Alternatives to Violence Project, and I would like to offer some scholarships to your staff or clients/youth to come to one of our workshops in Oakland. Do you know about AVP, or could I tell you a little about it? ... May I send you some information about us/give you our websites/visit you?" Maybe today you get to send literature. Follow up in

a week or 10 days with an offer to visit. It's all about connection. If you don't get anything from this contact, ask what organization they know that might be interested, whom to contact, and if you may use their name.

Recruitment occurs when one AVP volunteer connects with one prospective participant or, less frequently, with one supportive agency staff person. I personally have not done any publicity campaign or name recognition work. I only sit down, one-on-one, and connect with people. The one bigger presentation I did netted zero, although it "should" have generated enrollments. Announcements in my Meeting work only to the extent they bring people to talk one-on-one with me. At the beginning of outreach for this last workshop I said to our group of 12 facilitators, "If each of us enrolls one person, we will have a workshop. Some of us may enroll more than one, in which case we'll have a big workshop--maybe even a waiting list to start filling up the next one."

Note that an agency head legitimately may want to see a manual before the agency sends their clients. However, it is better if they come or send a staff person to a workshop to check it out.

If you don't already have connections to communities of color, find local groups who are involved in community work (eg. Family Service, professional groups, Fraternities or Sororities.)

I passionately wanted to give AVP away, and that is where I came from in all my contacts.

I also lead with the information that this program was developed at the request of and in collaboration with prisoners; it was not an outside fix, and it remains a collaboration.

So, we all know all of this; but for me, it was new to put it into practice.

Katherine Youngmeister fantastically organized the Oakland-Berkeley area for a couple of years and then burned out. Doing the recruitment without a partner and the group's allowing one person to do it all has worn out two outreach coordinators who had been highly successful. A warning to your group!



Wording for workshop flyers

Sometimes it is hard to describe an AVP workshop. It helps if you look at what others have written.

First, look at *AVPUSA Organizing Kit* (downloadable free from AVPusa.org), pages 27-30, to determine the basics you want to remember for any flyer.

Here is sample copy from flyers or emails to tickle your creativity:

From Gail Eastwood, Arcata, CA: *“Youth Alive! is sponsoring another **Community Bridge-building Workshop** for teens and adults, August 26-28, in Garberville, CA. The workshop is in the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) format, using fun and lively as well as serious activities to promote connections among people and stimulate learning about peacemaking. It’s not about lecturing; and although “techniques” for conflict resolution are a part of the mix, it’s not about the techniques. It’s about a way of being in the world--of being able to speak from the heart, to hear and be heard, to plug into the power that enables us to transcend our differences and disputes.*

This workshop builds toward a long-term goal of developing a team of trainers of all ages, teens and adults, to go into So Hum schools and lead “Challenge Day” type activities that promote peace and understanding on campus. We’d like to build communities--in and out of school--where everybody has the safety of being accepted and appreciated for who they are, where creative and peaceful solutions to problems are fostered.”

From Margaret Willitts: *“Learn a new way. . . to make a real difference in our community. AVP helps us explore the power we all have to change hostility and destructiveness into cooperation, community and justice.”*



From Kit Hanley: “Believe in Tomorrow”
*“It’s Time to Learn for ourselves . . . It’s Time to Teach othersto reduce and resolve conflict. . . .to learn and use skills with confidence. . .
 . . .to create safer and stronger families, workplaces & communities.”*

From Sharon Beckman, Santa Rosa, CA:
“Ready to Make Friends with Conflict? Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops help people turn their conflicts into opportunities for growth.

Conflict is a normal part of life and can be used as a tool for change and transformation. Our workshops use the shared experiences of participants, interactive exercises, games and role-plays to see beyond differences and to explore common ground and discover the power within ourselves to transform our lives.”



Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

Wording ...

And from the AVPUSA Organizing Kit, tweaked by Carroll Boone:

Learn a new way... to handle disagreements in your personal and work worlds.

Take a Conflict Resolution workshop.

ENJOY a hands-on, experiential workshop where you'll connect deeply with others, laugh, share and listen while learning ways to handle differences in your family, community and at work.

* Take **no** notes... Come prepared to discover new ways of approaching disagreement.

* **Treat yourself to this workshop** purely for personal growth. Or make it a first step toward facilitating Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops in communities, classrooms or prisons. AVP is active worldwide. See www.avpcalifornia.org for more information.

* This workshop is led by experienced AVP volunteers, who are currently facilitating workshops in their communities, at California prisons and with youth. All proceeds, after workshop costs, support working toward diversity in communities and in prisons.

* **Receive a certificate useful in job applications/resumes.**

From Joyce Bahzhaf, Nevada City, CA:
 "How are your relationships working?"

Need a little tweaking in the communication arena?

How about taking a workshop on conflict resolution, communication and community building?"

Consider this when you are writing copy to recruit people....

Seven of the most powerful words people gravitate toward and need to be considered when you try to engage them:
Love, Proven, Discover, Safe, You, Fun, Learn.



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AVP/USA 2013 Gathering Registration
Florida International University (FIU), Miami May 24-27, 2013

**Different Faces:
One Voice-One Vision**



Welcome to Miami, May 24-27, 2013!

We are a vibrant multicultural community. We embrace our diversity and consider it one of our greatest strengths and challenges. In a world which often divides us, AVP builds community. Dedicated to non-violence we look beyond our differences and come together to share our skills, knowledge and vision of hope.

Pre-conference, May 24, 2013: Homestead Prison

This is an opportunity to connect two different faces of the AVP community – inside and outside facilitators, and strengthen our common voice. You will experience a series of basic and advanced AVP workshop exercises facilitated by teams that include current inside facilitators and you will give them the opportunity to be part of our national gathering.

A background check will be required for all participants entering the institution; therefore registration MUST be received no later than March 30, 2013.

Keynote Speaker: On the evening of Friday, May 24



George Knox

Prof. George Knox comes to the FIU College of Law after many years of substantial contributions to the City of Miami. He was considered among the “100 Most Powerful People in Miami” by Miami Business Magazine. Professor Knox, received his J.D. from the University Of Miami School Of Law, and was the first person of African descent to join the faculty at the University of Arkansas School Of Law.

Time your arrival in Miami to join us Friday evening for this powerful kick-off for our weekend together, celebrating diversity and a shared commitment to build community.

Call for Workshop Proposals

AVP Miami welcomes proposals for workshops, panels, demonstrations, presentations, and other activities that value our rich diversity and generally support community building across difference.

Please submit your ideas to avpmiami@aol.com by February 1.

Conference Site: All regular conference workshops will be held at the FIU, Labor Center.

Conference Hotel: Our Conference Hotel is Comfort Suites at 3901 SW 117 Ave, Miami, FL, 33175.

See www.comfortsuites.com/hotel-miami-florida-fl086

All suites have a microwave, refrigerator, complimentary breakfast and access to the pool. There is free parking and internet.

There will be regular free shuttle service between the hotel and the FIU campus. Visit www.avpusaconference.org for regular updates on the conference and to register on-line.



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CY Youth	13.00	_____	_____
CO Organizing Kit 2010 edition	13.00	_____	_____

Spanish Manuals (Translated by PAV Mexico)	Price	Qty	Total
SB Basic	19.50	_____	_____
SA Advanced	26.00	_____	_____
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VC2 California Prison officials talk about AVP Intended for sharing with local and state officials	10.00	_____	_____
VN When you hear the word violence NEW 15 minute AVP promotional video	10.00	_____	_____

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EZ New Zealand Evaluation	6.50	_____	_____
ER Rwanda Report	2.50	_____	_____

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AT Trauma Healing Manual (Hoover) NEW	12.50	_____	_____
TA Transforming Power - AVP in Action	11.00	_____	_____
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WS Walking Softly in an Alien World	4.00	_____	_____
BU Building a Home for the Heart (New)	15.00	_____	_____
CI Peacemaking Circles and Youth (New)	20.00	_____	_____

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BP AVP-Overview & Background Pamphlet	1.50	_____	_____
BY AVP-USA By-Laws & Policy Guide	1.50	_____	_____
DI AVP Worldwide Contact Directory	1.50	_____	_____
RH Restorative Justice Pamphlet	1.50	_____	_____

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AVP GOES TO SCHOOL

By Confident Carolyn Schodt

It happened by word of mouth. Stacey Cruise of the American-Paradigm Charter School and the new leader of a failed Philadelphia middle school struggling with violence and abysmal reading scores heard about the Alternatives to Violence Project. The Delaware Valley AVP Council offered a series of workshops in the city's most drug-infested neighborhood. Dr. Cruise wanted to hear more. It was a hot August day when four AVP facilitators visited school staff. We shared personally and were grateful to be able to show the Blaze Nowara DVD, "What is Violence?" After that meeting, things happened fast. On August 23, 2012, the invitation came: Do an AVP Basic Workshop for the entire staff (80!) of the new Memphis Street Academy Middle School on September 5-7, 2012.

Confident Carolyn said, "Yes, we can!" and emailed up and down the East Coast. A phenomenal response took place! By August 27, twenty AVP facilitators had signed up, ready to travel from Massachusetts, New Jersey, Maryland, District of Columbia and Virginia to augment the local team. People responded to the challenging opportunity to work with an entire middle school staff.

Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting provided a site for team building, meals and feedback at the end of each day. Friends provided home hospitality. The school covered expenses. The school building was a chaotic work site in progress, with painters working feverishly to complete the work and furniture arriving for assembly. We had six classrooms available for the workshops.

The 80 participants were teachers, hall monitors, administrators and support staff. All were newly hired for a fresh start at this new charter school. Staff had

not worked together previously, and teachers were anxious to get their lesson plans finalized and their rooms set up. School was going to open September 11, 2012, and they were "invited" to participate in AVP. There were no functioning telephones or copy machines and no food service.

We observed the principle of "volunteers only" in the breach. Staff were expecting "another in-service training" and were surprised by the lack of handouts and the emphasis on one's personal experience. By the end of the first day, we had mixed reviews. Some felt the workshop was a waste of time when they had many pressing tasks to do. The participants were quick and wanted us to pick up the pace. But, by the end of the second day, we were getting more positive feedback and, by the third day, the workshops were "over the top."

We learned a lot, and so did they. We asked them to rate us on a 10-point scale; over half gave us "10 out of 10." The overall average was 9.1. Many participants gave rave reviews whether they had an exceptionally experienced facilitator team or not. **Trust the Process!!** We learned that what we have to offer is very useful to new schools wanting to create a culture of community, respect and caring.

At this point, we are offering monthly workshops on Saturdays for staff from the school to attend on a voluntary basis. The hope is that a school facilitating team will be developed and that, in time, students may become co-facilitators. However, for the immediate future, AVP will train some adults. Hopefully a culture of community will develop at the school where the "risky business" of learning and growing will be accomplished.

Flash news: A peek into the future!

This just came in! Santa Cruz, California, has just reported that their workshop recruitment has been so successful at diversifying their workshops that they put out a call for a couple of white people since none had yet registered. Super-recruiter and "returned-from-prison citizen" Dynamic Danny has filled the workshop with people he talks to on the bus, at community college, on the street. More on how he does this in the Spring Issue of *The Transformer*.

Getting calls on workshops from AVPUSA?

Are you receiving workshop participants from the AVPUSA.org website? Have you checked your listing lately? Is YOUR LOCAL connected to all the facilitators (and interested public) nationally that may want to reach you?

Is your "Contact Us" listing in the Local Groups database on AVP/USA.org up to date? Remember, only YOU can connect yourself with the world. Log in to the "Local Chapter Data" link on avpusa.org to see your Local's entry and update it.



The Power of Writing for *The Transformer*

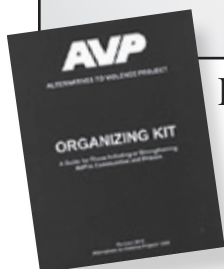
by Larry Bratt

A fellow AVPer, Ron Ellis, suggested this article. He and I discussed the impact of the Summer, 2012 issue of *The Transformer*, which AVP facilitators at the Jessup Correctional Institution (JCI) in Jessup, Maryland wrote. While seeing their articles in print was a boost, a more important and unexpected effect was what happened to the AVP community in the months leading up to the Summer issue.

Facilitator skills among the 11 contributing authors appeared to be re-energized, and more community spirit seemed to show up in workshops. Several new one-day workshops were developed on topics such as multi-cultural diversity, relationships and transforming power in parole and court hearings (actually a two-day workshop). We noticed better communication and more exchange of ideas on how to improve workshops among the facilitators.

We took pride when JCI facilitators made history by writing an entire issue of *The Transformer*, a first since the advent of the newsletter in 1975. I provided suggestions for some of the facilitators and edited contributions to the issue. Sometimes individual creativity can cause riffs when egos get engaged. Yet, the spirit of the cooperative enterprise generally guided group members, and self-esteem and self-respect were strengthened.

After *The Transformer* came out, two outside facilitators called the institution to participate in a Basic Workshop, including a couple of new outside participants. The facilitators mentioned they had read the Summer issue and wanted to return to JCI to see for themselves this innovative community of incarcerated facilitators. As all AVPers understand, workshops are more exciting when newcomers, especially outside guests, participate in a workshop. Such positive outcomes might not have occurred had we not taken the initiative to produce the Summer 2012 issue. One could say this is the power of *The Transformer*.



Do you have an *Organizing Kit*?

AVPUSA offers a free download (or you can order your own handy, beautifully bound copy) of the *Organizing Kit* which includes a whole chapter on recruitment including an appendix item on Diversity. Go to www.avpusa.org Look for "Want to start your own AVP?"

A Publication of AVP/USA

If your group or region is interested becoming rejuvenated write an issue for *The Transformer*, contact Editorial Coordinator, P.O. Box 3294, Santa Barbara, CA 93130 editor@avpusa.org



The Goose Story

Next fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter
Flying along in V formation,
You might consider what science has discovered
About why they fly that way:

As each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following.

By flying in V formation,
The whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range
Than if each bird flew on its own.

PEOPLE WHO SHARE A COMMON DIRECTION AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY CAN GET WHERE THEY ARE GOING MORE QUICKLY AND EASILY BECAUSE THEY ARE TRAVELING ON THE THRUST OF ONE ANOTHER.

When a goose falls out of formation, It suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone
And quickly gets back into formation To take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

IF WE HAVE AS MUCH SENSE AS A GOOSE, WE WILL STAY IN FORMATION WITH THOSE WHO ARE HEADED THE SAME WAY WE ARE.

When the lead goose gets tired, it rotates back into the wing formation;
And another goose flies in the point position.

IT'S SENSIBLE TO TAKE TURNS WITH DEMANDING JOBS AND LEADERSHIP. PEOPLE (OR GEESE) DEPEND ON EACH OTHER'S SKILLS, CAPABILITIES, GIFTS, TALENTS AND RESOURCES.

Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

WE NEED TO MAKE SURE OUR HONKING IS ENCOURAGING.

How prisoners can support AVP/USA

By Larry Bratt

How to involve prisoners in AVP/USA? This was a question of concern raised at the Summer, 2012 Conference. The problem JCI AVPers encounter with attempts to connect with AVPers outside the wall is that volunteers are forbidden by DOC policy to have any contact with inside AVPers on a personal level. If they do and are discovered, they can lose their privileges to facilitate workshops.

What I've realized is that, as an incarcerated citizen, I need to write my articles and essays on AVP diligently and send them to newspapers, magazines and newsletters. My writings on AVP have found space between the pages of The Washington Post, local newspapers and The Transformer. The pen has become my Excalibur, serving the needs of AVP and its principles established at Greenhaven in 1975.



Another way I serve is by connecting with outside facilitators in other states, which is legal. Through snail-mail, we exchange letters and share ideas and ways to improve workshops and exercises and to engage more citizens in exploring AVP. This is how Playful Pat and I

work on projects to propel *The Transformer* forward.

However, for those incarcerated souls who do not share my voraciousness with the pen, what can you do

to involve yourself and your prison AVP group with AVP/USA? In other prisons where I have lived and facilitated, we were able to contact area schools who were eager to bring in students to participate in mini-

workshops (two hours) on AVP.

The students enjoyed participating in the exercises. Afterward, the facilitators gave testimonials on their lives, stressing the negatives of criminal behavior. The students were awakened to the perils of rash decision making and learned second chances after criminal actions seldom occur.

Another activity that Maryland AVPers enjoyed was performing a play on how AVP involvement helped to transform a drug dealer and user into a productive person. We had local newspapers cover the play that was open to area students, who attended a performance.

Perhaps my experiences in helping to highlight AVP with the outside community can inspire other prison AVP groups to think of creative ways to engage prisoners in AVP/USA. If so, please send your stories and viewpoints to *The Transformer*, P.O. Box 3294, Santa Barbara, CA 93130.

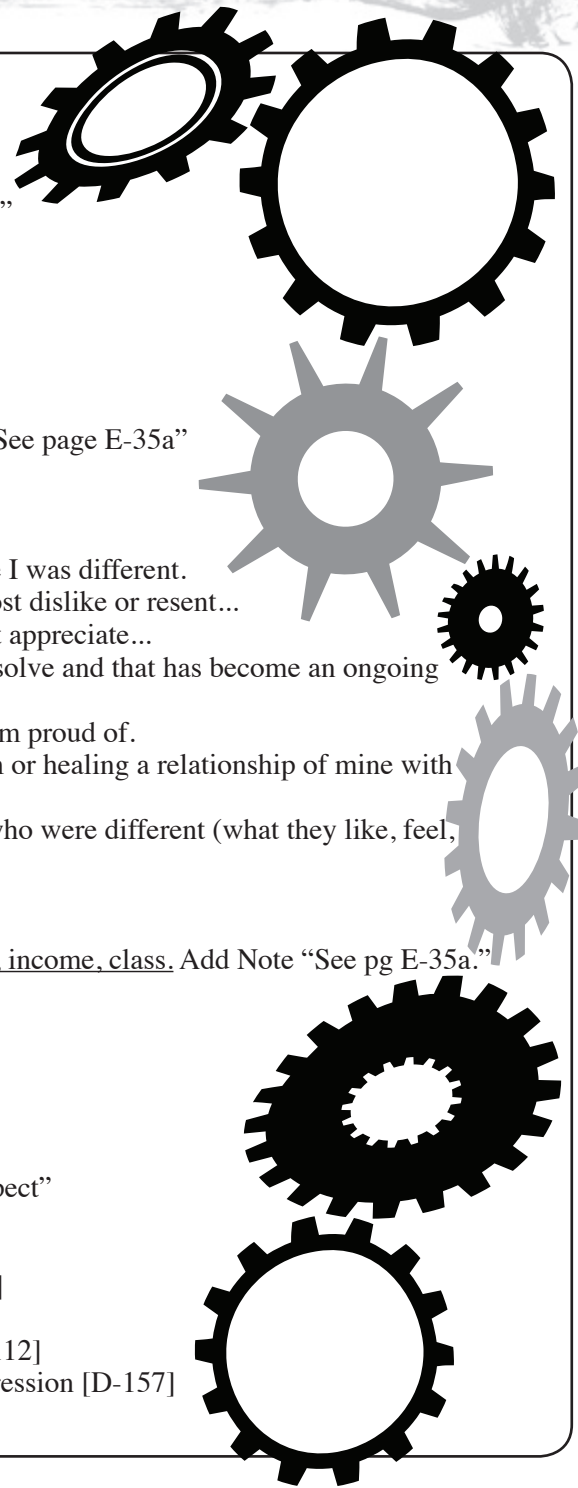
Larry Bratt, a facilitator inside Jessup Correctional Institution, MD, has been helping on the Editorial Board of the Transformer.

Are you a member of AVP/USA Email discussion groups?

There are two: AVP-L, our long-standing group that explores the 'nuts and bolts' of education and facilitation of AVP workshops. And, there's the FFF (Facilitator's Free Forum) that ranges more widely and freely to areas of non-violence philosophy and other topics of interest to AVPers.



For more about the groups and to subscribe, look for "Subscribe to AVP discussion groups" on www.AVP.org



Increasing Diversity in Workshops

Suggested by CA Diversity Support Group Dec 2011

AVP Basic Manual F-3 Gatherings and Reentries Add Note “See pg E-35a”

- Something that increases diversity is...
- The way I show people that I respect differences is...
- A time I said or did something to value differences was...
- I am different from most people because...
- A person I value because they are different from me is...

Concentric Circles [E-20, Advanced D-38, 39] Add Note “**On Diversity:** See page E-35a”

- Some ways I show respect for differences.
- A time I did not show respect for differences and it hurt me and/or others.
- A way I react when someone reacts with anger in different way than I do.
- A time that I have been victimized/exploited/manipulated/coerced because I was different.
- An attitude or a way of being treated by people who are different that I most dislike or resent...
- An attitude of way of being treated by people who are different that I most appreciate...
- A problem with someone who is different that I have never managed to resolve and that has become an ongoing frustration.
- A problem with someone who is different that I have resolved in a way I am proud of.
- A time when Transforming Power has played a part in resolving a problem or healing a relationship of mine with someone who is different.
- A funny or strange misconception I had as a child/teenager about people who were different (what they like, feel, etc.)
- What things about a people who are different have been hard for me?

Change Scenarios to specify a difference such as race, age, height, weight, income, class. Add Note “See pg E-35a.”

- Hassle Line Scenario, E-27
- “I” Message Scenarios E-34, 35
- Quick Decisions Situation E-42, 43
- Brainstorm: What’s in a Word? (Adv D-21) Add “Respect vs. Disrespect”

Possible Exercises

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Brainstorm: What’s in a Word? (Adv D-21) | Add “Respect vs. Disrespect” |
| Carefronting [D-27] | Crossover [D56-7] |
| Definitions [D60] | Dots [Adv-62] |
| Empathy [E-22] | In Common [Adv D-104] |
| In His Shoes [Adv D-105] | Inclusion [D-107] |
| Labels [D-111] | Let’s Go Swimming [D-112] |
| Speakout [D-149] | Three Questions on Oppression [D-157] |

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