



The

# TRANSFORMER

Supporting and Celebrating the Facilitators of AVP Workshops

## What's new in the AVP Community ?

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## Introducing OUR NEW AVP PRESIDENT, DAWN E. ADDY

**W**hen we think about AVP-USA, prison work is usually the first thought. But prison work is just one aspect of AVP as an organization. My journey with AVP began in Spring of 1997 with an invitation from Eduardo Diaz (Espresso Eduardo) to join a weekend workshop in prison. Eduardo and I had met in a dialogue group I was facilitating in the community. That was 17 years ago, and I'm still going into prisons on a regular basis, mainly to two facilities where a high proportion of inmates have completed at least a basic workshop.

I direct the Center for Labor Research and Studies at Florida International University (FIU) in Miami. I incorporate AVP techniques and principles into my curricula, especially for courses in Conflict Resolution and Consensus Building. I bring student interns into prisons as participants. The students come from many disciplines: psychology, social work, adult education, criminal justice, women's studies and sociology. The students use their experience with AVP to transform professional development practices.

One former student is the Regional Director of Parole for South Florida; another developed a program with at-risk kids called ESTOPP (Eradicating the School to Prison Pipeline); another is assessing South Florida AVP programs for her doctoral dissertation. She obtained a grant to start a Panthers for Peace club at FIU. I am promoting a conversation at both AVP-USA and

AVP-International gatherings to develop a higher education network to share best practices using AVP in research and teaching. The group can mentor young



*AVP-USA new President Dawn Addy*

professionals in related fields. In my new role as President, I'm asking the Committee of Committees to help local groups develop fiscally sustainable models so they are not so reliant on just one or two individuals. AVP workshops affect both individuals and groups. Since community is a lived experience, it is our mission to transform both lives and groups in the community. I hope you will join me in Seattle at the National AVP Gathering, May 23-26, 2015, to celebrate our accomplishments over the last 40 years and become energized to move our organization forward.

## The TRANSFORMER

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

Back issues may be found at [www.thetransformer.us](http://www.thetransformer.us)

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

## Unlock The Secret Of "C Of C"

**C of C** stands for AVP's Committee of Committees. It is, essentially, the Board of Directors of AVP-USA. It is composed of the chairs of various AVP national committees plus our elected officers. Committee of Committee members are busy people doing local programs just like the rest of us.

Can you imagine presenting a great idea you have for non-violence training *without* the experience of a national organization behind you? Do you appreciate learning new exercises? Do you take for granted the availability of updated manuals to purchase? Have you ever learned something important or shared something at an Annual National Gathering?

Have you ever dealt with a prison administrator or community leader who wants to shorten a workshop or require participation in it? If so, you had the standards of a national organization to back you up. Have you ever received a scholarship to attend a National Gathering? Do you use the AVP/USA.org website? Have you ever referred someone to the site or directed someone to the research papers there?

All this is done by volunteers just like you—but we need help! When you see a "help wanted" call from an AVP national committee, please respond. We have a very part-time employee, Thomas Boyd, working on fund raising. He needs your help also. Remember, we work using the internet mostly, so your time and talent can be used wherever you live!

## Conference Committee For 2015

**W**e are a "grass roots" organization—that means *you* have a lot of influence on what you would like to have happen at our Annual Gathering on Memorial Day Weekend, May 22-25, 2015, near Seattle, Washington.

We will be celebrating our 40th Anniversary at this Conference and welcome your suggestions for speakers, programs and breakout sessions. What do we want to celebrate? What do we need to learn? What do we need to do next? Now is the time to make suggestions. Contact the Local Committee ([rick@krouscop.net](mailto:rick@krouscop.net)) or Nancy of the National Conference Committee ([nhutchins471@comcast.com](mailto:nhutchins471@comcast.com)).

We also would like to hear from one or two people who would serve on the scholarship committee for this year's conference, particularly if you have been the recipient of a previous award.

Registration and program details will be available at [www.avpconference.org](http://www.avpconference.org) in January.

## Increase in Community Workshops in USA?

The very well compiled 2013 CLARG (Committee of Local and Regional Groups) Report shows some interesting trends in growth of community workshops.

### Basic workshops increase

This annual report of AVP-USA reflects a dramatic increase in the Basic Workshops offered in the community. In 2007, we did not ask about community workshops; however, in 2008, 81 workshops took place with 996 participants. In 2013, well over double that number of Basics were reported (108) with 1,241 participants.

### Second Level and Facilitator training flat

Advanced and Training for Facilitators Workshops showed a drop by half during 2010 and 2011 and then recovery in 2012 and 2013, but no real increase. This is reflected statistically by 34 Advanced and 22 T4Fs in 2008; returning in 2013 to 36 and 27 workshops respectively.

### Youth workshops inconsistent

First recording of youth workshops in this report started in 2009, with 37 Basic Workshops and 173 participants. These dropped during the next 3 years to 12, 12 and 5 workshops and jumped to 48 in 2013.

Advanced Workshops for youth showed a leap in participants from 173 in 2009 to 844 in 2013, with an equally dramatic drop for one year (2012) to 16 graduates.

No T4Fs were recorded until 2010, but all have been in the single digits since reporting began and are all over the map in terms of graduates from 56 in 2010 to 40, 37 and 4 in the next 3 years.

### Trends by regions

The states with the larger prison programs, New York and California, continue to steadily increase their community workshops. New York offered 23 community workshops with 189 participants, plus 6 workshops for 89 youth. California offered 44 workshops in communities with 9 Basic Workshops (specifically for 173 youth), with a total of 717 California community graduates. These 2 states trained 995 people in community workshops (37% of the national total). All other states offered an increase from the past by 1 or 2 workshops a year.

### Locations of workshops

Where workshops are located in the community often reflects the variety of audiences that AVP is reaching. Many groups are still depending on the initial roots of AVP, Quaker Meetings, to provide attendees and/or a site for the workshops.

AVP groups reaching deeper into the local culture are meeting at the following places:

- Community Centers
- Calvary, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Unitarian and Episcopal Churches
- Song Common House, Eco-Village, Ithaca, NY
- Women's Info Center, Syracuse, NY
- Inter-Cultural Women's Center, Anthony, NM
- Gandhi Institute, Rochester, NY
- Interfaith Center at the University of Rochester, Rochester, NY
- Family Partnership Center, Poughkeepsie, NY
- Colleges and universities, including: Vassar College, Haverford College, Arcadia University, University of Nebraska
- World Peace Sanctuary, Wassaic, NY
- Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence, Buffalo, NY
- The Center for Returning Citizens, Philadelphia, PA
- Charter High and Middle Schools
- New Jerusalem Recovery Community, Philadelphia, PA
- Friends General Conference at the University of North Colorado
- Palestine and Israel

### New developments

Illinois and Minnesota facilitators combined to resurrect AVP-Chicago inner-city workshops where a group is not meeting regularly and seeking ways to offer community workshops.

Nebraska showed the largest community growth in the Midwest regions. In Lincoln, they find it amazing to realize they are giving more workshops in the community than inside the regular prisons. One reason for this is the availability of men and women from the Community Corrections Center, also made possible by facilitators who have trained at the other prisons as well as new facilitators and participants. Others come from the County Drug

Continued on page 4

*Continued from page 3*

## Increase in Community...

Court and People's City Mission. Mississippi facilitator Jim Henderson was asked to present some of the AVP materials at Grace House (<http://www.gracehousems.org>). Though not a correctional institution, Grace House had experienced some incidents of violence resulting from the same sources of violence that prisoners have experienced; some residents of Grace House have been incarcerated. In January, weekly hour-long sessions with the residents of Grace House began.

New Mexico's Crossing Borders AVP reports small but important and familiar joys:

- 1) We exist and made it through our first year.
- 2) We have connected with facilitators in Arizona and have found an experienced facilitator who has moved into our area.
- 3) People from our Basics are interested in continuing with AVP.

Familiar challenges other AVP groups are facing:

- 1) We are starting up in a widespread area (El Paso to Tucson and north to Silver City).
- 2) Many of those interested are overworked and have busy lives.
- 3) Incorporating and training Spanish-speaking facilitators
- 4) How to do the IRS report

This year California volunteers, who not only get things going but keep them going in their local groups, have stepped up and are taking AVP guides and methods into their council meetings. After a workshop on "circle dialogues" at the statewide Fall Gathering, a follow-up experiential workshop was offered to a council wrestling with its direction and leadership. We look towards making our "business" meetings extensions of our workshop methods, which we hope will increase the effectiveness and longevity of our local groups.

### Keeping returning citizens involved

A dream in California is for all community workshops to be run by those who were formerly incarcerated. Maintaining relationships with former inmates during that rocky re-entry period has involved a long learning

curve for those working in the community. Once someone calls their 800 number, keeping in contact with these individuals is an ongoing challenge; but they are making progress.

### Answers that would be valuable in future CLARG reports

Though the question of the number of community people trained in prison is not asked in this report, anecdotal information shows that these community-trained numbers are actually greater because we know community members often are brought into prisons to be trained when a community workshop either is not available or is cancelled due to lack of participants.

The other question that would be interesting is: how many youth are trained in community workshops that are not specifically called youth workshops? Experience shows there is definitely an overlap of youth in adult and adult in youth workshops.

We need to be cautious and selective in asking more questions, which may not help AVP-USA understand the needs of community groups.

### Thank you

The fact that so many local groups keep such detailed tracking of these numbers is impressive for an all-volunteer organization--or any organization for that matter. Special thanks to Valentine Doyle for compiling the 2013 CLARG Report.

The individuals who offer community workshops are amazing in their stick-to-itiveness and creativity after having to cancel workshops or put on very small workshops. And yet they figure out a way to make it work better the next time.

*The summary was compiled by Pat Hardy. For a copy of the full report, go to [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org); on the left side, click on "For our current work, see our Annual Workshop Report."*

*The introduction of a national Community Interest Committee monthly conference call has been a good source of ideas for finding community workshop attendees and getting ideas on handling challenges specific to community work. Steve Gelb in San Diego is the new coordinator of this valuable resource. The group also has a forum to which members can contribute. To subscribe, email [community+subscribe@avpusa.org](mailto:community+subscribe@avpusa.org).*

## From the AVP-USA Facilitator Group: Are you offering workshops with a different group than the usual Quakers?

*We asked: What are you doing in your community--especially ways you are involving Returning Citizens? With the announcement by FCNL (Friends Committee on National Legislation) of the White House's awarding Homeboy Industries as one of the Champions of Change in the area of Reentry, I realized that around the U.S. we are doing some different and amazing things in the community. For example, AVP-Los Angeles is offering regular workshops and minis at Homeboy Industries.*

*So tell us what you are doing...*

AVP-Santa Barbara, California, is working with at-risk youth and gang-intervention street workers who are formerly incarcerated citizens. In bi-monthly workshops with Juvenile Hall youth who are on Probation, community people are invited to participate, giving us a workshop location for adults when we cannot get a completely full workshop.

*Present Pat Hardy /  
Lovable Lizzie Rodriguez*

### **Lincoln, Nebraska and Returning Citizens**

For the past year or so in Lincoln, NE, we have been offering regular (meaning nearly monthly) workshops in the community. At least one person on every team has been someone who started AVP while they were in prison. Many come from the Work Release Center. Several are on parole--some, completely free. It has been wonderful!  
*Mama Marge*

### **AVP Community Workshops in Springfield, Massachusetts**

AVP-Springfield has a new site for our AVP Community workshops. They will be held at the Springfield Housing Authority's new offices at 60 Congress St., Springfield, MA, thanks to facilitator/coordinator, Michelle Booth

of the Springfield Housing Authority. This year, five AVP facilitators have stepped up to form the AVP Springfield Area Council. They will be attending luncheons and events for the purpose of seeking volunteers and are working together to organize workshops in each of four areas: community workshops in English, in Spanish, in Springfield public schools and at the Ludlow Pre-Release Center.

Four one-day trainings (one per month) occurred over the summer at the AVP community workshop site on Congress Street. The goal was to bring Springfield leadership up to date with the organization, connect them to AVP-USA and AVP-MA and work through the agendas and various exercises.

*Karing Kathy Rubenstein,  
Springfield Coordinator,  
[kathymrubenstein@gmail.com](mailto:kathymrubenstein@gmail.com)*

### **Ideas from the monthly Community Interest Committee conference call:**

After great reviews of the AVP-USA *Organizing Kit*, this group discussed what needs to be in the next publication around community workshop recruitment:

Find an established group as the core group of attendees; then add random people from the community. Presently, others are involved with these groups: Juvenile Hall, Community Alliances of service providers, center for nonviolence, homeless center for their staff, multi-group organizations and interfaith coalition.

Consciously recruiting for diversity (in education, gender, age, socio-economic, gang-related, homeless ) helps to increase the quality of the workshop. The more barriers you break down, the more amazing the interaction.

Is council diverse as a result of this diversity in workshop participants? To some extent, but not as much as we would like. Now, we have a few returned citizens, people with

financial diversity, 30-year-olds and occupationally diverse. This is slow going--it's still mostly older, white, long-termers and Quakers.

The Community Interest Committee conference call is held the second Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm Pacific time and 8:30pm Eastern time. To be a part of this Google group to share more ideas, subscribe at [community+subscribe@avpusa.org](mailto:community+subscribe@avpusa.org); conference call number is 641-715-3300; access code is 988935#.

Join others to share successes and challenges once a month or during the month.

## AVP Community

by Generous Jason Guinn

At the end of each workshop when we get to the question: “Where do we go from here?”, I can feel the reluctance of the participants for the workshop to end. When I feel that, I always say, “This workshop may not have made us all best friends, but the experience we shared will allow us to acknowledge each other with a smile, a wave, a “good morning” because we are now part of the AVP community. This feeling we have does not have to end just because the workshop is over.

The different personalities, goals, ages and backgrounds all seem to fade when AVP is brought onto the yard. Once I have had the AVP experience and shared some intimate

parts of my life, it’s hard to go back and look at those people as being so different from me. I know there are community members willing to share about themselves and to listen to and help with anything I have to say. This is because of the AVP bond of compassion, respect and caring which most of us never knew when we had to hustle the whole time. Allowing Transforming Power to work in my life is a beacon which draws others towards AVP. At least once a day I overhear guys talking about AVP. Sometimes it’s just, “Hey, what is AVP?” Other times it’s someone sharing how AVP affected them or asking the question, “How do I sign up?”

Being a community member reminds me I have tools to use when a conflict arises. It also reminds me I have the obligation to walk the AVP walk and talk the AVP talk. AVP helps keep me grounded. When prison administrations support the program--as they do at (name of prison)--they deserve an AVP thank you! Inside and outside facilitators also deserve our thanks.

*Generous Jason has been an inside AVP coordinator in three prisons and helped start AVP in two of these. Currently he is in Calipatria State Prison, near El Centro, CA.*

## AVP SUPEREROGATION

by Smiling Steven Garofolo

The Alternatives to Violence Project taught me the meaning of supererogation, going the extra mile, nearly four decades ago. I always shared it whenever the opportunity presented itself. Everyone needs to be valued—everyone needs to be appreciated. Every person needs that blessing.

Transforming Power is the moral fiber that enables us to be people builders. Using Transforming Power, we seek opportunities to encourage others, bring out the best in them and help them accomplish their dreams. Transforming Power helps us speak words of respect, honesty and caring. By affirming others and letting them know they are valued, Transforming Power calls out the seeds of greatness and helps them rise higher.

How many people have never been told, “You are important, special, smart or a winner”? There are people--possibly in your AVP group right now--whom you work or play ball with or even a family member who are starving for approval. They crave for you to speak the

Transforming Power blessing over their lives.

Reach for that which is good in others. When you give your approval while letting them know that you are proud of them, it is very affirming. Everyone needs to be valued and appreciated. Every person needs that blessing. Build a community based on honesty, respect and caring by planting Transforming Power seeds in AVP groups and with cofacilitators and friends in prison.

Befriend someone no one talks to. Are you taking an interest to make that person’s life better? Are you listening to their dreams without judgment? Reach for that which is good in others while encouraging them—that’s being an AVP people builder.

If you talk with successful people, they’ll tell you someone believed in them. Someone planted a seed and encouraged them when they didn’t believe in themselves. Someone helped them get a break. Someone told them to be willing to suffer for what is

important.

Sometimes we don’t realize the power of Transforming Power--what it means when someone tells a person, “I believe in you--be patient and persistent; you’ve got what it takes.” Every facilitator can be someone else’s number one fan by encouraging them, lifting them up when they fall and celebrating when they succeed.

I would like to extend my genuine appreciation to the facilitators of the Eastern Correctional Facility for welcoming me back into the AVP family after so many years in the North Country wilderness where AVP is desperately needed but not yet available. The men upstate are starving for AVP Transforming Power people builders.

*Smiling Steve writes from within Eastern New York Correctional Facility, Napanoch, NY*

Excerpted from the AVP USA *Organizing Kit, Chapter 4: KEEPING YOUR LOCAL GROUP VITAL*  
**A workshop is one weekend. The local group is real life.**

Local groups are the basic foundation of AVP nationally and internationally. Your local group's health is maintained primarily by your facilitators' commitment to working out the inevitable problems. Though experienced facilitators around the country are happy to answer your questions, the real problem-solving decisions come from your fellow local facilitators. Ideas for solutions to group stress can be found in the Basic, Advanced and Training for Facilitators Manuals and within you--not unlike life.

**SUGGESTIONS THAT MAY HELP OVER THE LONG HAUL AS YOU GROW:**

- Have regular meetings of the AVP local group on whatever schedule works for your group. Face-to-face is preferable, but conference calls can fill gaps. Check [FreeConferenceCall.com](http://FreeConferenceCall.com). Try an annual party.
- If possible keep doing community workshops to build up and strengthen the base of outside facilitators and community support.

**NUTS AND BOLTS**

- Keep good financial records. Either designate a revolving Treasurer position or have your bookkeeping records looked at by more than one set of eyes.
- Take brief minutes of your meetings with decisions listed and distribute to all group members.
- Raise funds! Offer community workshops. Someone in your group may feel led to do wider fundraising; encourage them.
- Develop a lead facilitator process, including mentoring and lead facilitator committee meetings and possibly develop Advanced Facilitation Skills workshops. A body of work already is being done at a number of Local Councils; check the AVP/USA list serve on the web to get input. See Appendix 4: Developing lead facilitators.
- Keeping true to the AVP/USA Policy Statement in your workshops and your group meetings helps to maintain a higher standard of ethical AVP behavior.

**Your best resource is AVP/USA, Inc.**

- *Subscribe to **The Transformer** for Facilitators. (This quarterly publication is free to all new facilitators for the first year after they graduate from the TforF.) Very low price after that. Order online at [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org). Check [www.TheTransformer.us](http://www.TheTransformer.us) for free helpful back issues.*
- *Send representatives to National Conferences. The next one is in Seattle, WA, May 25-27, 2015.*
- *Seed grants are available for new or struggling organizations that might want to build a supply box for a new institution, bring in facilitators and get help covering airfare, get non-profit status (501 c3), have facilitator training sessions.*
- *Participate on the AVP/USA list serve. (Go to [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org), click on "AVP/USA" then "e-mail listserv", passwords: member, texashug)*
- *Be sure to ask for any kind of help you need. Start with the CLARG (Committee of Local and Regional Groups, see [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org) site.) A great deal of experience and wisdom is in the larger circle of AVP; take advantage of this. No doubt someone has dealt with your issues before and is willing to share their experience or wisdom gained. Use the website for articles, talk with your regional representative (also found on the website), use the AVP/USA listserv and expect responses that are helpful.*
- *The website, with updated information, is probably the best source: [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org); but other contact information is available also by calling the national AVP/USA, Inc. office at (888) 278-7820, toll-free, or (651) 644-5851. One can also write to: AVP/USA, 1050 Selby Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104 or [avp@avpusa.org](mailto:avp@avpusa.org)*
- *Keep your local information up-to-date on the website. Local councils, even of two people, are also responsible for filling out workshop data on the website. This consists of logging in as "member" using the password "texashug" and filling in the information (about three minutes per workshop) in the bar marked "AVP/USA, workshop data and activity reports."*

**MAINTAINING A COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
 (aka Local Group, Area Council)**

A local council may consist of yourself and your best friend; or you might be large enough to operate from a single office with paid staff and coordinate programs in 15 prisons from a central location. In this chapter, we will assume you've successfully begun your AVP program and wish to maintain and possibly grow it in a healthy supportive way.

Catalyst factor

The role of "leadership" in AVP is to bring people together to see where they want to go and who is prepared to make

it happen. The concept of a “person in charge” out in front is not part of the AVP vocabulary. The term “coordinator” or “organizer” is more likely to fit the role of “leader.” A group takes ownership when they are led (coordinated) from behind—learning how to do it themselves. Those “in charge” may fit best into AVP if they think of themselves as volunteer coordinators catalyzing others into discovering their best use.

To understand more about the grass-roots approach of AVP—beyond AVP materials—read *The Spider and the Starfish* by Brafman and Beckstrom. A group will grow only as quickly as the individual members are willing to take on projects. When you find people balking at taking on responsibilities for maintaining the group, take time to step back as a group and listen to one another. Listen for individual needs and challenges as they relate to the group’s needs and challenges, remembering the AVP Guides and Agreements from the Basic Manual as you work through these.

(For familiar organizational structures in AVP, see Appendix 4: Examples of local groups.)

*When things get tough, step back and inside.*

*One local group found itself increasingly faced with unresolved disagreements and enmity between one another. To try to resolve their unending conflict, they decided to stop facilitating workshops for a year during which they worked on themselves through a retreat, an AVP Advanced Workshop just for them and regular social meetings, taking an opportunity to get to know one another and redevelop trust and caring among them. That group still functions today, expanding and supporting workshops throughout the region.*

- Deal with conflicts openly, using AVP guidelines. Talking behind one another’s backs and allowing issues to be unresolved create unnecessary problems for the group.
- Remain true to the AVP guidelines and the ideal of consensus decision-making.
- Support those who serve making policy and decisions, yet allow for reversal of decisions later if called for.
- Rotate the coordinators if at all possible to develop experience and reduce burnout. Vary the facilitators on your teams so people work frequently with different people. The process of working with different teams is invigorating, sometimes challenging – a chance to develop one’s AVP skills and stimulate new ways of approaching the same basic formats.
- Include your new facilitators in a workshop as early as possible after their TforF. If you have a schedule of upcoming events, each person in the TforF can sign up and know when they will have the opportunity to facilitate.
- Consider hosting the annual national gathering or a regional meeting. This can be very powerful in pulling your local group together, increasing consciousness of the larger picture – not only in the United States but also internationally--and stimulating creativity and interest in doing more local and/or prison work.

*Don’t forget the inside facilitators...*

*A positive teaching and motivating dynamic flows back and forth with those who do community workshops AND prison workshops. Doing prison workshops provides an excellent opportunity for facilitators to practice and sharpen their group process skills. It also provides them with insight and credibility when working with teenagers in the community or in schools.*

*The inside facilitators benefit by receiving fresh ideas from the outside. They, in turn, give insight based upon living every day with constant conflict that can quickly turn to violence. The inmates, many of whom bring great wisdom to AVP then have the satisfaction of helping those on the outside to sharpen and season their work.*

**Look for additional information in the next *Transformer* newsletter on the following topics for your local group: Financial organization, Setting up a healthy financial system, Acquiring non-profit tax status, Compensating facilitators, Fundraising. Also check out [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org) for a free copy on line, *AVP/USA Organizing Kit***



## News from AVP International Gathering in Ireland

While in Ireland, at Wheatfield Prison, each country was given a vase with “AVP” inscribed on it. AVP-USA President Dawn Addy accepted the vase for the USA. After a discussion with the AVP-USA Committee of Committees (C of C) at our last meeting, it was decided where the vase should reside. Since the office in Minnesota is the only official office (housing the distribution center), Dawn presented the vase to the folks at the Minnesota office. She also gave Terry, the Distribution Center Director, an AVP bag that the fellows from Wheatfield made and created in their print shop. It has the mandala on one side and the AVP-IG dove in flight symbol on the other. She enjoyed a “great meeting with the Minnesota group; we had a nice discussion about how we each became involved in AVP and brainstormed ideas for recruitment of other outside facilitators.”



*Dawn Addy, AVP-USA President visits with local facilitators in Minnesota at the AVP-USA office in St. Paul to deliver AVP-IG gift for the keeping by AVP facilitator coordinator Richard McLemore II. The gift will be kept at the national office in St. Paul, MN, where Richard is the new man at the AVP USA Distribution Center filling your orders.*

## Our Combined Purpose

by Dapper Dan Hedrick

I was asked by a friend: What is the purpose of AVP?  
All I could show him was the difference it made in me and others.

Inside the disease of violence  
I had become a welcome carrier.  
Within myself I needed to change.  
There was a way to break down that barrier.

The support and friendship given there,  
The lost path was surely found.  
To access those dark recesses deep inside  
Which had been kept so tightly bound.

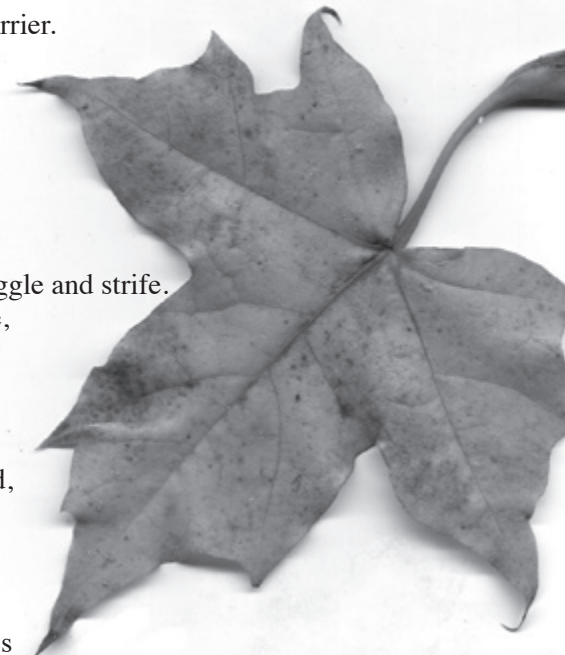
It showed me new enlightenment  
Out of the darkness that contained struggle and strife.  
For myself, my family and those that care,  
I found a new path to lead my life.

A life of future, not of past,  
Where I hold my head high.  
Giving praise instead of pain to all around,  
And my Higher Power in the deep sky.

Interested in my words,  
My friend came to learn more.  
Closed at first, he surrendered his defenses  
And chose to open the door.

I saw a change in him,  
The same that others saw in me.  
We graduated, he looked to me to say:  
Change, my friend--the true purpose of AVP.

*Dapper Dan Hedrick, is an AVP facilitator at the Correctional Center, Lincoln, Nebraska*



**Another group joins the AVP community at Homestead CI**

An offshoot of Land Strip and the great work Ray Rios and fellow AVPers are doing can be seen at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/BreathingSpaceNY>

Hopefully we will be seeing an article on this great reentry project in a future issue.

Here is the flyer on this renowned reentry support offered in New York.



## Landing Strip

Our Mission: "Making a Difference"

We are a group of men and women who meet to offer a welcoming hand to those with some AVP experience or those who are interested in learning about the Alternatives to Violence Project, who are going through the transition back to society. We have learned that often the most difficult bid begins upon release from prison. Facilitators and others interested in AVP who have never been incarcerated are also very welcome.

### New York City:

When: First Tuesday and the third Wednesday of every month, 6pm—9pm

Where: **Friends (Quaker) Meetinghouse**  
**15 Rutherford Place, NY, NY 10003**

corner of East 15th St. and Rutherford Place which is between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues and 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets (Take the N, R, L or 4, 5, or 6 trains to 14 Street-Union Square.) Refreshment as well as transportation reimbursement (\$5) are provided at the meetings.

### Rochester:

When: First Thursday of every month, 5pm—7pm

Where: **Church of the Ascension**  
**2 Riverside St., Rochester, NY 14613** (corner of Lake Ave. and Riverside)  
 Second floor library. Refreshment is provided.

Landing Strip serves those interested in finding a safe place where the challenges of transition can be shared openly and most importantly, understood by those who have already "been there" and face the same challenges.

Although we do not provide direct services such as housing, job references, food or clothing, we do "check-in" with each other and network to provide support and connections to these and other resources. What we have most importantly is a continuing "community based on honesty, respect and caring." Our members share current information that is helpful in the transition process, as well as honest friendship and moral support.

**Call for information: 1-800-909-8920**



**Alternatives to Violence Project**

**P.O. Box 6851**

**Ithaca, NY 14851-6851**

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



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