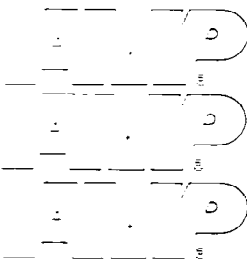


the Transformer

for AVP Workshop Leaders
Spring 1993



WHAT'S NEW IN AVP



AVP is Launched in Hungary

by Susanna Eveson

Many of the toughest inmates in Hungary's maximum security prison found the Adjective Name Game one of the most powerful and moving experiences in their lives. Many were in tears at the end of the exercise. There was a real sense of breakthrough.

In much of the English speaking world, we expect to get on first name basis almost immediately and we do not distinguish between formal and familiar forms of address. However, in Hungarian, German, French and many other languages, the familiar form of address is used only by family and very close friends. It is absolutely never used between people of different "status" and certainly, a prison official would never allow a prison inmate to address him in a familiar form.

The fact that four AVP trainers would come in and ask to be addressed in their familiar names was an absolutely remarkable and liberating experience for these inmates.

In spite of the fact that some of the inmates were rounded up only ten minutes before

the session and told that "Three Americans and one Hungarian are going to talk about something new and strange for an hour" (In fact, it was one Canadian and three Hungarians.) the three hour introductory session at "Czillag Fegyhazi e Borton Szrged," a maximum security prison, was enthusiastically received. Already 60 people are on the waiting list for the Basic Workshop at this maximum security prison when Susanna Eveson returns in August.

The series of prison and community workshop were set up with the help of Istvan Fedor, a Hungarian citizen and educator who has worked with Susanna in the past.

In the city of Miskolc, about 100 miles northeast of Budapest, sixteen men and women, mostly from the helping professions participated in the first community workshop. Hrotko Laszlo, head of the Family Supporting Service said "... I am convinced that the AVP program would be very profitable to the clients of the Family Supporting Service,

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who are unemployed ethnic minorities in increasing number... I have great expectation to see AVP trainers working in Hungary and spreading to a wider segment of our society."

Thirteen sessions were held using volunteer facilitators working with Susanna and Istvan. Each day the facilitators prepared sessions by translating exercises from the Basic Manual into Hungarian and adapting the Light & Livelies, Gatherings etc. The cultural differences continually challenged the team, especially in role plays. A common theme was dealing with the emotionally loaded conflicts resulting from extramarital affairs.

At Miskloc Prison, twenty inmates participated in a three hour introductory session on February 20.

At a family services agency in Debrecen, near the Romanian border, twelve men and women participated in a nine session Basic Workshop. After the workshop, Margit Bota, a participant said "I believe that this would not only alter our life as individuals but would make the life of the whole world more easy and harmonious."

In the town of Szeged near the border with Croatia, eleven community members participated in another nine session workshop. One participant in the Szeged workshop said "The course was held in a superb atmosphere, I always left the meetings relaxed and in a very good spirit. For me the playfulness was important, I miss this greatly in my own life. ...I feel that the most important thing was that I received a much fresher and quantitatively different view of

life, that would make easier our everyday existence.

The current needs to establish the AVP program in Hungary are:

1. Foundation of an AVP organization and its membership in AVP International.
2. Complete translation of all three AVP Manuals: Basic, Advanced and Training for Trainers into Hungarian.
3. Help in training and certification of 20 trainers.
4. Support and promotion materials (articles, videos etc) both in English and Hungarian. (One Hungarian workshop was videotaped)
5. Two trainings, Advanced and Training for Trainers in August for the present Basic Workshop graduates.
6. Funding of about \$23,000 US or \$25,000 Canadian to cover the costs of the work above.

Susanna Eveson is a Canadian citizen who lives in Toronto. At the end of World War II she escaped from Communist dominated Hungary and spent several months in both Hungarian and Czechoslovak prisons as the result of unsuccessful escape attempts. She is a psychotherapist and specializes in Psychodrama and Bioenergetics.

Trainer Needed who Speaks Hungarian

Susanna Eveson is seeking an AVP trainer who speaks Hungarian to assist her in setting up the AVP program in Hungary and to accompany her on her trip in August 1993. If you are interested, please call her at 416-782-3404.

WHAT'S NEW IN AVP

“Das Projekt Alternative zur Gewalttaetigkeit” (PAG)

Introducing AVP into Germany

by Bill McMechan

During February, 1993, Paula Rogge of AVP Texas and Rosemarie and Bill McMechan of AVP Canada responded to several groups in Germany to speak to them about AVP. Paula had laid the groundwork well ahead of time by corresponding with various Friends' Meetings and the Peace Committee of the German Yearly Meeting of Friends. We were able to spend some time with the Peace Committee, putting on a mini-workshop during their special weekend seminar on Conflict Resolution at Bad Prymont. We were greeted warmly in Freiburg, Stuttgart, Darmstadt, Heidelberg, Koeln and Bad Prymont. Paula also visited Frankfurt, Erlangen, Bremen and Lubeck.

In all of these places there was enthusiasm for the program, both from the Quaker meetings and the public, including several chaplains from the prison system. Each group visited provided a list of attenders who requested further contact with AVP (PAG).

As the result of this visit:



Paula Rogge

1. It is hoped to have several workshops in the late fall of this year.
2. The Peace Committee of the German Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends is to consider adopting AVP (PAG) as a major concern in the near future.
3. The Committee will also consider being responsible for having at least the Basic Manual translated into German. This translation would then be screened by German speaking experienced facilitators. It is hoped that two of those involved in the translation will be young men who are currently involved in conflict resolution and non-violent programs, which use some materials identical to AVP. One of these friends has met with AVPeople in the USA last year.

While there are prospects of two German speaking facilitators being available for workshops in the Fall, we would like to know of any others who are interested in participating, realizing that there is no known source of travel funds and expenses at this time.

AVP-USA Meets in Denver

The Board Meeting of AVP-USA will be held in Denver, Colorado over the Labor Day Weekend, September 4-6. Some of the key topics that will be discussed are:

- Approval of by-laws for AVP-USA
- Incorporation of National Organization
- Update on office and staff
- Nominate a permanent board

- Develop committee structure and functions
 - Plan next International Conference
- It is vital that all of the Interim Board Members attend this meeting. The meeting is also open to interested AVP Facilitators. To reserve space and find hospitality arrangements, please contact Bruce Thron-Weber of AVP Colorado (New Foundations).
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AROUND AVP

AVP Canada

Notes from the Canadian Prairies

The program at Bowden Prison in Alberta continues to move forward. Not only with regular Basic, Advanced and Training for Trainers Workshops, but also with monthly mini-workshops to support graduates in using TP in their lives. Karing Keith tells how AVP has helped him to deal with his angry feelings and explosive temper.

Transforming Powder to Transforming Power

by *Karing Keith*

As a recent graduate of the Advanced AVP workshop, I am truly grateful for this community. I wish to thank all for their caring and sharing. As the workshop progressed and all the areas were brainstormed, a certain image of revelation took place, or better said, transformed. I wish to share this with my good friends of AVP.

As we were studying the session on "Triggers" my thought went to guns and the effect that triggers have on them (guns). As I thought I realized that triggers do not have an effect on the gun but they are only a tool that detonates the Powder that then explodes and sends the bullet on its potentially devastating journey.

Not the gun, barrel, bullet, powder, shell or trigger are responsible for the result of the pressure placed on the trigger. But nobody will argue with the results.

As my mind 'wondered I started to analyze and I came to the conclusion that I would have to aim my "gun" at something that could take the blast harmlessly.

For me the harmless sand pit in which to fire has been just writing down all my thoughts and feelings on paper. As I look back at my sand pit I have to laugh, and yet I know I was serious at the time I wrote it down. This has given me a harmless way to deal with my feelings because it forces me to do three things:

1. Think before acting.
2. I must identify what made me angry. Looking back I can often see that too often it was how the problem was presented and by whom, not the problem itself.
3. The last thing that became important to me and still is, is to have to try to expect the best and to objectively look at all the alternatives.

Now I say to myself when and if something "triggers" me, "This one is going into the sand pit." With that my mind goes into action using Transforming Power. With time, maybe I will be able to disguise my buttons and triggers enough so that others will not know when they are pushing or pulling them, but yet being aware of our own empowerment.

Monthly Mini-Workshops

by *Miraculous Mike*

Each month since graduating from my Basic I look forward to the Bowden monthly mini-workshop meetings. I always learn something new to help me in my quest to successfully use TP on a daily basis.

It is so encouraging when outside guests make the trek from as far away as Edmonton or Calgary... Fun is an important aspect to our meetings – it helps to break down the "shell" we carry with us – often without realizing it... *Continued on next page*

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AVP Canada

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Our facilitator, Delightful Donna led us a new exercise "Transforming Power Bridge" which used the Transforming Power Medallion as a starting point to apply TP in our lives.

As I sit at home this evening the thought crossed my mind that it would be great if all humanity could laugh and joke the way we did tonight... They would realize that any violence in the world just doesn't pay. One questions I had was "Would the leaders of the world take this risk?"

I don't have an answer – but I know each month as our AVP family grows, more AVPers come to our monthly meetings and are taking the risk. I share with all AVPers the dream that this growth will continue to be worldwide and inclusive of each and every human being – how happy a place this world would be with all of us sharing on the prosperity of nonviolence!

AVP in Edmonton

Northern Alberta core group of six people has formed in Edmonton and community workshops are being organized. A goal of this group is to serve the inmates at the Fort Saskatchewan Prison.

First Workshop in a Canadian Women's Prison

In Ontario, the first two AVP workshops in a Women's Prison have been held at Kingston Penitentiary for women. The program for men continues at Warkworth, London and Kitchener-Waterloo.

National Meeting of AVP-Canada in August

The national meeting will be held on August 21 at Pickering College north of Toronto. This will be part of the Canadian Yearly Meeting of Friends. Contact Bill McMechan for further details.

AVP Program Grows in Australia

AVP has expanded to provide workshops in both the Men's and Women's prisons near Brisbane. Recently, when a special advanced workshop on the topic of "Addictive Behavior" was held at the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre, one participant said:

"I could say that AVP has changed me and it has in lots of ways, I believe I let myself shine and AVP allowed me to understand the needs I was after. I want to join you in AVP."

Another said "It repairs my heart, so I dare to be part of the community outside again

and don't have to have a minimal lifestyle anymore due to a lack of trust. It prevents me from going insane inside prison, something I have been very worried about."

AVP requested in all Prisons in Queensland

The demand for these workshops has been so great that the small group of trainers has been conducting two or three workshops per month. Based on the success of these workshops, the Corrective Services Commission for the State of Queensland has requested the AVP program for all Correctional Centers.



AVP Colorado Grows

Under the sponsorship of New Foundations, the AVP program is reaching out to many new groups. In the last year the program has been extended to:

Workshops for women at the Colorado Women's Correctional Facility in Pueblo. A recent Advanced Workshop was a great success as women began to "realize the ways that self-forgiveness, communication and anger are intertwined with fear. We looked for ways of breaking the bondage that fear keeps us in." Recently, monthly support groups have been established at the Women's Prison also.

Workshops for elementary school children ages 11 to 13 at the Curtis Park Community Center in Denver.

Workshops for high school youth at the Jefferson County Open School in Lakewood, a suburb of Denver.

Workshops at Cenikor Drug Treatment and Rehab Center including a Training for Trainers which included both inside and outside participants. Monthly support groups have also been established at this facility.

The AVP program continues at the major, maximum security men's prison, Territorial Correctional Facility at Canon City.

In addition, New Foundations operates a one-to-one visitation program at the Denver County Jail. This program which has operated for many years was originally designed to provide emotional support for inmates. Recently, a new curriculum was developed to help inmates with communication, goal setting and conflict resolution skills.

AVP Starts up in Montana

AVP gets off to a roaring start in Montana with the help of Trainers Pablo Stanfield and Siva Raven from Seattle. So far, 15 community people in Montana have been trained as facilitators. The dedicated effort of Scott Morgan and Tom Javins of Missoula helped to organize the workshops and recruit participants. As the group has been setting up an organizational structure, additional community workshops have been held. Participants have been attracted from as far away as Butte and Anaconda. Prison contacts have been made with the Chaplain at the Deer Lodge Facility and the group is working toward meeting the needs of prison inmates in Montana.

AVP in Texas

by Val Liveoak, State Coordinator

The AVP program is getting started in Texas with community workshops popping up all over the state. Nearly a dozen workshops have been held so far. A core of trainers has been established in Houston where eight workshops have been held, three Basics, three Advanced and two Training for Trainers. Two Basics have been held in Austin and one in San Antonio. A basic has been organized in Dallas in July.

The goal of AVP Texas is to focus on community workshops and build up local AVP groups before offering a prison workshop program. Several school districts have shown interest in AVP and two staff members from a county jail with a "Boot Camp" style program took the AVP training:

AROUND AVP

AVP New York Opens New Office

AVP has outgrown its tiny office in the historic 15th Street Friends Meeting in New York City and has decided to relocate the State Office to a more central location.

Syracuse, NY has been selected and an attractive space has been found in a modern, air conditioned building housing the New York Council of Churches headquarters. The other organizations in the building are quite compatible with the AVP's goals.

AVP's new home is a professional looking office with plenty of storage space for materials. An up to date copy center and print shop in the basement is open to all building tenants and will assist in the production of AVP materials.

New address for AVP-New York

AVP- New York
3049 East Genesee Street
Syracuse, NY 13224
315 449-0845



AVP New York Appoints New State Administrator

John (Jay) Lieske has been appointed as the new State Administrator for AVP New York and on May 1, he assumed the responsibility of operating the new office in Syracuse, NY. Jay replaces Paddy Lane who has decided to devote her full time efforts to expanding the AVP program in New York City.

Jay has become a living example of Transforming Power in action. After leading a life that involved drugs and violence, Jay found himself in Sing Sing prison. In 1987, soon after he made the difficult commitment to be "clean" he took a Basic workshop. In the workshop, he found that he received far more than a certificate, he found a new way of life.

Jay discovered that he had a talent for group process and he went on to become a Trainer and soon became a Lead Trainer. Because of his organizational skills, he became the Inmate Coordinator for the AVP program at Sing Sing. He helped to organize the monthly Facilitator's Sessions which not

only helped Trainers practice their skills, but also became a laboratory to develop and test new exercises. Jay brought important new exercises such as "Colored Dots" to the AVP program during this period.

Shortly after Jay was released in 1990, because of his commitment to the AVP program, he became a part-time staff member at the New York AVP office in spite of the very modest salary. In the evenings, he worked as a waiter to pay for his rent and groceries. As the work load increased, he became more indispensable and found that he was working nearly full time for AVP. Jay saw that inquiries about AVP were answered, mailings went out on time, manuals were printed as needed and orders for materials were shipped across the country.

AVP New York is pleased to have such a dedicated and capable administrator and he looks forward to visiting and working with all the local AVP Groups in New York.

When Should Trainers be Paid?

Are there exceptions to our volunteer leadership policy?

Despite the fact that this topic has been discussed many times before, the question continues to arise as to whether there are circumstances under which paying facilitators for doing AVP workshops should be recognized as a legitimate practice.

This is an issue that AVP is facing nationally, with a great variety of needs and views stemming from the varied circumstances of AVP communities around the country, we are asked to review their own feelings and views on the subject. We would like to forge consensus on this issue.

Two principal circumstances which have prompted this policy to be challenged are:

1. Work with youth, primarily in schools, where teachers or parents might be trained to provide training for students during school hours when many AVP facilitators are normally working at other jobs.
2. Situations where individuals would like to do training, particularly in impoverished areas where violence is rampant, but where their personal financial circumstances do not permit them to lead workshops without remuneration.

Towards addressing the concerns above and other situations that trainers may know of, we might ask ourselves the following questions and see if the answers lead to the formulation of new AVP policies.

1. Is our current policy of allowing only volunteers to facilitate AVP workshops culturally exclusive, eliminating from competition well qualified individuals who are in such a marginal economic

status that they cannot afford to give up work time to do AVP? By the same token, is considering payment of ex-prisoners to facilitate AVP workshops an invitation to prison inmates to become involved in AVP with an eye to future remuneration?

2. Are there situations where the value of having volunteers doing the facilitation particularly important (e.g., in prisons)? Are there situations where this is not the case? (e.g., school teachers and school administrators may have more respect for paid professionals than volunteers)? What is/are the AVP value/s which are preserved or endangered by having paid facilitators implement the program?
 3. Can we separate out those situations where paying facilitators would seem justified from those where it would seem best to keep it voluntary without the one undermining the other?
 4. Is it wise for AVP to have really good programming, such as being developed in some schools, having to break off and use a different name just because facilitators are being remunerated, e.g. HIP in Syracuse, AVIS in Buffalo and Hands of Peace in Alaska? If we do promote AVP with paid facilitators in schools, where does the jurisdiction of AVP end and the jurisdiction of the school or the organization which pays the AVP facilitator begin? How do we preserve the confidentiality of participants?
 5. Should we consider a policy of having only volunteer facilitators with certain well defined exceptions, perhaps on
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a case by case basis?

6. Will the payment of facilitators on a larger scale undermine the quality and integrity of the AVP experience? Do we run the risk of AVP becoming a marketed commodity?
7. As we take the long view, what is likely to become the outcome of the present policy? Will it tend to make the program

one for the economically elite? Are there other ways, aside from the payment of facilitators, that can encourage greater participation of facilitators form a more economically diverse community?

8. How will funds for the payment of trainers be raised? Will the payment of facilitators change AVP from a "training driven organization" to a "funding driven organization?"

Why Trainers Should Not be Paid

by Richard Cunningham, AVP New York

AVP, similar to many non-profit organizations, depends on volunteers. What is a volunteer? According to the *American College Dictionary* "A volunteer is someone who enters into any services by his/her own free will, or offers themselves for any services or undertaking"

We, like many other volunteers, offer our time and energy because we want to. Our greatest reward is not found in a "stipend" but in knowing we might have helped someone understand the impact that violence has on us, how it affects our lives, family and environment. From our interactions with that person, that person usually learns something about themselves, and we learn something about ourselves.

Usually participants who complete the Basic Workshop, move on to the Advanced and Training for Trainers Workshops. Afterwards, they are requesting to get involved as facilitators. We all have our private lives, our work lives, but we usually can find time to volunteer ourselves.

Should AVP Facilitators receive some type

of stipend seems to be the debate in many circles?
...No!!!



I have done several workshops outside of the New York Area, for example, Washington D.C. My travel cost was reimbursed, my meals and shelter were provided by the AVP group that invited me. No stipend was involved. My only rewards were several:

1. Carrying the AVP message.
2. Meeting new friends.
3. Enjoying the weekend.

The stipend debate raises a lot of questions and two of them are:

1. What will the quality of workshops be?
2. How will the stipend affect those who might not have done a workshop in months, or even years, and have not come to AVP meetings? Will these individuals be encouraged by the stipend to get involved?

Will inmate trainers be provided with a stipend? Will this stipend encourage them to take an active role once they are released from prison? *continued on next page*

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The more this issue is debated the more problems come up. Diversity has always been an issue for us to encourage the growth of AVP, but will a stipend attract or encourage the various diverse groups.

No matter what, we cannot afford to get away from the AVP mission, "The Alternatives to Violence Project is a multicultural

organization of VOLUNTEERS offering experiential workshops that empower individuals to liberate themselves from the burden of violence."

That is what we have embraced as volunteers, so I beg you, stick with our mission and let us drop this stipend debate and continue to move forward. keeping the AVP mission in focus.

A new approach for Role Plays

The Boxing Ring

by Kimmitt Edgar and Nic Fine from AVP Britain

This role play technique created by LEAP provides a structured and safe environment for experimenting with alternative ways of responding to potentially violent situations. The title conveys the basic structure, the ring, the rounds, the referee and coaches in the corners.

Objectives

The purpose of the boxing ring should always be made clear to the workshop group. In AVP workshops, its primary uses are for skill development (assertiveness, communication) and to provide participants with an experience of conflict resolution in action. It gives participants a real opportunity to slow down, see with more clarity, explore choices, experience different options and to give and receive support from the group. It also gives other members of the group to be involved as coaches and monitors rather than just spectators.

How it works

The group will decide on a situation that will test the role players, for example, one person will be accused by another of stealing his radio.

The Players

Participants volunteer to take both roles. Give the characters melodramatic names on sticky labels to distinguish clearly between the role and the rest of the workshop group. In this case "Big Jim" will accuse "Humble Herb" of stealing his radio. Big Jim will be the aggressor and Humble Herb will seek to keep his cool and try to defuse the situation.

The Coaches

Both role players will be assigned two coaches, who will give ideas and tips to the role players between rounds. Each role player has time before the role play begins to prepare with their coach. One or two other group members can be appointed as monitors to give feedback at the end of the role play about the effectiveness of the coaching.

The Referee

The referee, a trainer, sets the scene, designates the coaching corners, explains the rules and insures that they are honored.

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No physical contact is allowed and characters must stay at least a foot apart. The ref can call "Freeze" if the role play becomes too heated. At this point the role players are to stop and the ref may emphasize the agreed upon rules, or send players to their corners. The role players also have the right to stop the action by calling "time out."

The First Round

As the role play begins, the two characters eye each other warily as they enter the ring. Big Jim tells Humble Herb that he knows that he has taken his radio and he wants it back. Humble Herb says that he doesn't know what Jim is talking about. The temperature rises. After two or three minutes, the ref calls the end of the round. This call should be made when there is enough material for the coaches to work on, or when either player is in need of some support. Ending the round depends on judgment rather than strict obedience to the clock.

In the corner, Humble Herb's coaches make suggestions to resolve the problem. Big Jim's coaches are encouraging him to keep the pressure on. The next round will begin when the referee determines that the coaches have had enough time to work. Between rounds, in consultation with the players, the ref may decide to make the next scene an hour or day later, or in a different location. The ref gives thirty seconds warning before the next round.

The Second Round

In the second round, Humble Herb asks Big Jim if they can talk over the problem of the missing radio and come up with ideas of

what to do about it. But Big Jim doesn't want to talk; he wants his radio and if he doesn't get it, there will be trouble. Humble Herb tries to be sympathetic about the loss of the radio. Big Jim continues to accuse Humble herb and the role play is going nowhere. The ref calls the end of the round.

The Third Round

Round three begins with no appreciable advance. Humble Herb's coaches have not been able to give him any fresh ideas. Humble Herb maintains his cool but the dispute seems deadlocked. In this case, however, he has a sudden thought. He remembers where he first saw the radio. "It was Bob's radio when I came upon this wing. As I recall, you nicked it from him in the first place!" Big Jim opens his mouth, but can't think of anything to say. He takes the challenge in good humor and shakes Humble Herb's hand.

Now the work of debriefing begins and players are carefully taken out of their roles. The discussion afterwards should interpret the role play in terms of elements that either escalated or de-escalated the conflict. One participant suggested that the ending would not have worked out if the accusation had not been true. It was also pointed out that Humble Herb's offer to discuss the problem showed genuine and sympathetic concern.

The boxing ring structure has demonstrated its value in working with a variety of groups in different settings.

WHAT'S NEW IN AVP

Call for Songs for AVP Songbook

by Jennifer Snow Wolff

Singing is a wonderful way to create community, to share powerful messages of self-esteem, love and to empower the singers. An AVP songbook has long been needed.

Songs are an obvious choice in AVP workshops as light and livelies and closings. The song should be easy to learn and sing in a group, be funny or express AVP principles of self-esteem, communication, cooperation or nonviolent problem solving.

I would like songs that are new and unheard. This increases a song's ability to recreate at a later time, the feelings of community and empowerment that are felt during the intense three days of the workshop.

Some brain researchers have noted that the area of the brain which controls the learning dominance for music, (the limbic system on the right side of the brain) is the same general area that controls social interactions and spirituality. If a song is learned for the first time during a workshop, this song will be powerfully associated with the feelings felt at the first time hearing of the song. The neural connections of the brain will be stronger for a brand new song than a song which had been learned at an earlier time.

Organization of Song Materials

I intend to produce a songbook and a songsheet with lyrics for participants.

The songbook will include lyrics, music and chords for each song and recommendations

for how the song can be used, I.E. for a Basic, Advanced or Training for Trainers Workshop. If for an Advanced workshop, which topic can it be used for (Anger, Fear, Forgiveness, Racism, etc.) If the song has been used successfully in workshops, suggestion and notes by the trainer will be included.

Songwriters will be contacted for copyright information and biographical information. I would especially like to include songs by persons who have been incarcerated, persons of color and women as well as songs that deal with justice, nonviolence and difficult issues such as AIDS.

How to Nominate a Song:

At the minimum, send lyrics with the name and address of the songwriter. Also, send either a cheap tape with the song or the sheet music of the song. If you have any biographical data on the songwriter, send that, and if you have used the song in a workshop, send your recommendations on how to use the song.

For anyone who would like to help work on the project, I have:

- Release forms and letters to send to songwriters to request permission to use the songs.
- A detailed form for submission of songs.
- Outline for Songbook.

Contact: Jennifer Snow Wolff, 79 Dana Avenue, Albany, NY 12208 Phone 518 465-0973 (Through 9-93)

WHAT'S NEW IN AVP

Tips on Working with Youth

Some suggestions from an AVP conference on Working with Youth held in Delhi, New York in April:

- Treat Youth as adults.
- Be "I"-ful in your communications.
- Use Positive reframing of statements.
- Offer the participants power.
- DON'T leave the room to clinic.
- Lead by example.
- Spend more time on ground rules – develop it into a contract.
- Be Clear!!! kids will test you.
- Do the Affirmation Exercise in small groups changing the question to "What my best friend likes about me is..."
- A good tool to reverse negative humor: Have the naysayers state three positive things about the other and three positive things about themselves.
- Keep the rules clear on drug use, say "You're high, you're out."
- Include lots of Light & Livelies in the agenda, but be aware they can either fly or flop depending on how they're led. Some youth may be offended by these "kiddie" games.

If you are involved in youth programs or want to learn more about youth programs, please contact Florence McNeil of AVP New York.

The Youth committee is especially interested information from AVP Youth Program facilitators on sample agendas, what has worked well and what has been a problem.

AVP Works with Youth in East Los Angeles

An AVP workshop in a troubled interracial high school in East Los Angeles taught the value of patience and flexibility in working with teens. The workshop was led by two college students, Hannah and Lorig. Despite the fact that the workshop started late, there were frequent interruptions and it became painfully clear that some of the participants were not volunteers, the facilitators felt, "the workshop was ultimately a huge success and yes, AVP always works."

Racial and ethnic comments were a constant problem. Leaders of youth workshops need strategies for dealing with putdowns. Sometimes "enforcing" the ground rules doesn't work.

Instead of lecturing the group like their teachers or parents, Hannah and Lorig decided to use experiential learning. They chose "Perceptions Based on Partial Knowledge" with Lorig as the subject. On one of the cards she listed that she was "Armenian." They soon discovered the very low character ratings in the exercise were due to this characteristic. One participant said he "disliked all Armenians and would never trust any of them." When asked if their ratings would change if they knew the person, the reply was "No, all Armenians are alike." They were shocked to learn that Lorig was Armenian and the impact of the exercise was stronger than words could have ever been.

In the closing circle one participant said "Thank you for not kicking us out of the room when we were rowdy and disruptive. You respected us, and that was ultimately what mattered most."

WHAT'S NEW IN AVP

AVP Britain Underway

The newly formed AVP Britain Coordinating Group unites local AVP groups throughout the UK. To aid this process, an AVP Newsletter is being published to share ideas and news. The AVP efforts are being coordinated by Helen Drewery at Friends House in London.

AVP South-West England recently held a Training for Trainers with eleven participants. Further community workshops are scheduled in the area.

AVP London held a Basic Workshop and an organizing meeting held in Oxford attracted twenty people.

AVP North-West has conducted Basic and Advanced workshops in Eccles and Grendon. A Basic Workshop was also conducted at Glenthorne in the Lake District for a Quaker Meeting. Additional community workshops are planned

AVP in Northern Ireland

The AVP program is being introduced in violence plagued Belfast. Steve Rosenbluth of Montreal is currently working as a volunteer for a Mennonite project in

Northern Ireland. Community workshops have been established and Steve is helping to facilitate AVP workshops in prisons.

AVP New England Spreads Out

by Mary Gray Legg

New England AVPers gathered at Hartford, Connecticut in May to coordinate a multifaceted effort in five states. Previously, four or five local groups were operating independently. Community workshops are now popping up across the region and trainers are cooperating by traveling from state to state to get the program started.

Workshops have been held in Putney, Vermont, Hanover, New Hampshire and Brunswick, Maine this Spring through the efforts of Debbie McIlwaine and Mary Gray Legg.

Prison workshops are continuing in Rhode Island with the devoted effort of Bobbi

Houlihan. Prison workshops are beginning in Connecticut prisons with programs at the Brooklyn, CT and Gardner, CT. Trainers Mary Ann Lion, Evelyn Aledia, Wendy Poplett and Jan Currier have spearheaded the program. AVP in Connecticut and Rhode Island is strongly supported by the Department of Corrections. However, difficulties with the corrections officials in Massachusetts have seriously hampered efforts in the state.

AVP New England has started a newsletter through the help of AFSC and a fundraising committee led by Richard Callahan is seeking to put the organization on a firm financial base.

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