

AVP WA NEWSLETTER

Winter 2019

<http://avpwa.org>

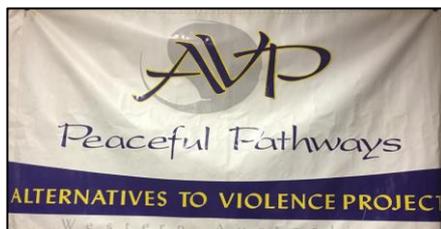


An Aboriginal version of the Mandala

Upcoming workshops

- September 7 – 9: Acacia (Protection) Advanced
- September 8, 15: Community ASeTTS Basic
- September 24, 25: HIPP Helena T4F
- September 24 – 26: Karnet Advanced
- October 8 – 10: Bunbury Prison T4F
- October 19 – 21: Acacia (Mainstream) Advanced
- October 28 – 30: Wooroloo T4F
- November 1 – 3: Acacia (Protection) T4F
- November 15 – 17: Acacia (Mainstream) T4F
- November 23, 30: Community T4F @ Osborne Pk
- November 26 – 28: Bunbury Prison Basic
- December 3 – 5: Karnet T4F
- December 16 – 18: Wooroloo Basic

AVPWA – 25 YEAR Celebration!!



Saturday 21st September

2.00 – 5.00 pm

The Rise, 28 Eighth Avenue, Maylands

Please come along and join in an afternoon of celebration, reflections and memories with a couple of light & livelies thrown in.

All welcome

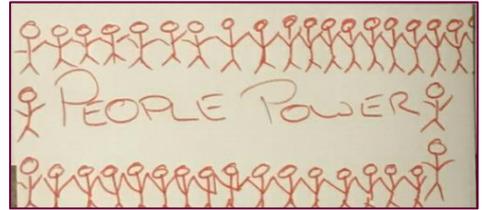
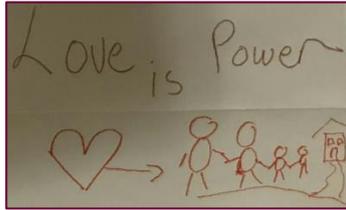
Afternoon tea provided – please register for catering purposes.

Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/avpwa-25th-anniversary-tickets-70465015759>

or Email avp.wa1@gmail.com



Bumper stickers



*“No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background or his religion. People must learn to hate and if we can learn to hate then we can be taught to love, as love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.”
~ Nelson Mandela ~*



Training day 3rd August

Jim Thom



This was a special day in that we were joined by Fred who did his first workshop in 1996! There were also several new facilitators experiencing their first AVPWA training session. Over the day there were a total of 24 participants.

After our gathering Selene explained a new way of **Introducing Transforming Power** in the basic workshop which she experienced at a recent Alice Springs Prison workshop.

The participants consider conflicts they have solved non-violently in five small groups (if they can't think of any, perhaps they have witnessed someone else doing so). Each group chooses one story which they then share with the whole group. Each group is then given a piece of the mandala and asked to consider how this played a role in the resolution of the conflict, after which they report back to the big group. The mandala is then formed in the centre...including the TP centre piece. The facilitator then explains the concept of Transforming Power and facilitates a general discussion asking the participants if they see other aspects of the mandala in their conflict resolution stories in addition to the one they were given.

Facilitators may now each share a TP story if they wish and ask the group how the mandala was used to resolve their issue.

We thought that this way had the benefit of empowering the participants by coming up with the story, the resolution and the connection to the mandala aspects. It could be empowering for participants to know they have these skills already and that they can apply them in many potentially violent situations.

Bheena introduced a new light and lively called “**Grab the Bottle**”. Two lines face one another, holding hands. The facilitator flips a coin near the first person in each line. If it is a head, the first person in the line squeezes the hand of his or her neighbour and this is passed on down the line. At the end of the lines is one only plastic bottle which must be snatched up by the last person in the line on receiving the hand squeeze. Continue till everyone has had a turn at the front of the line.

We continued to consider the **AVP Core Values** in small groups. These were the comments shared in the small groups:

Core Value 5 – Good within everyone. The belief that there is something of value within us all. We seek to affirm and connect with that capacity for good. We accept each person on their life journey.

- This is the basis of AVP – especially in prison
- Although there is good within us all there may be a genetic predisposition to violence. Also conditions such as mental illness, foetal alcohol syndrome, difficult upbringing and clinical depression may make it difficult to connect with the goodness in some individuals.
- Acceptance, hope and forgiveness are important attitudes
- There is an infectious aspect to connecting with the good in yourself. If you genuinely operate from this part of your being it is more likely to activate it in others.
- It can be difficult to remember about the good in others in the middle of a conflict
- Being non-judgemental, affirming and respectful
- Important to recognise the good in self
- Remember to bring it back to people’s consciousness
- A positive attitude, awareness of value and empathy develops into compassion
- AVP enables us to be aware of the good in others
- It helps to build trust
- Acceptance of difference but acknowledge the commonality, humility and humanity in all
- The effects of trauma can affect the belief of the good in everyone

Core Value 6 – Journey of Personal Exploration. The understanding that each person’s path is different. We each empower our own path, and begin by being open to change.

- This may apply more to facilitators than participants. Some participants may not yet be ready to “empower their own path.”
- Getting over the fear of the unknown and taking risks
- Facilitators can provide guidance, inspiration and motivation but we can’t change anyone. (Be the change you want to see in others, Ghandi).
- We help each other on the journey
- Accept differences in environment and circumstances
- Facilitators need to be committed to their own personal journeys
- Teams lead to different methods of encouraging new ideas
- Empowering, learning, reflection – trust the process
- We could use the Johari Window model for communication between us to reduce the blind stuff and increase feedback.
- We sometimes need to admit when we are wrong.
- It helps to be growing with others on a similar journey
- We need to learn to trust ourselves and explore change
- We may need boundaries and be assertive about our own needs, our own journey
- We need to develop self-worth and self-value sharing and exploring with others.
- Things affect our personal journey that we can’t control
- Our inner resilience has influence on how much we can determine our own path
- Resilience comes from learning and experience and can change how we respond or lose control
- Need to address trauma and emotion

After lunch we had a report from the recent **National Gathering in NSW** from Selene and John. Both found this event useful both for learning and for networking.

Selene introduced a light and lively called “**Mugga Mugga!**” which was introduced by Xavier at the NG.

Demonstrate the 'whoosh' Mexican wave one way...when it comes back round to you, hold your forearms straight in front of you saying "whoa!" At this, the person who last whooshed you is to send it back the other way. Anyone can 'whoa'. For any hesitations, the whole circle says 'mugga mugga' and stomps their feet whilst sliding their arms forwards and backwards tantrum style. Restart with whom came unstuck.

John reported on a session on **Mental Health First Aid**. This involved the SUDS – Subjective Units of Distress Scale. We thought that this may be useful for facilitators to assess the degree of distress in participants and alert them to any requiring special attention or perhaps to be left alone. There was some concern expressed that we as AVP facilitators need to be mindful of working within the bounds of our competence so that we don't end up in situations we are not trained to handle.

Fergus ran the **Acknowledgement Process** an exercise from the advanced manual. The purpose of this is to help build community and self-esteem. It involved being in pairs and in turn sharing first a difficulty in one's life, and then an achievement one has made in recent times. Speakers take turns in listening and talking, and the end of each contribution the speaker is acknowledged either by expression, body language or a short phrase but the situations are not discussed.

It was a powerful process and an effective way of demonstrating the power of listening and being acknowledged.

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A.V.P: a poem about choice

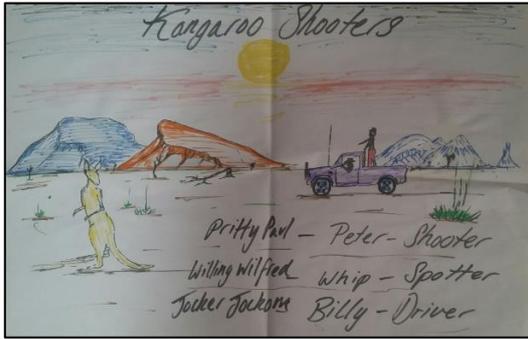
Rob (Darwin Prison) 2017

Bad thoughts linger in my head,
Dark shadows blocked the path ahead.
Was it wrong to wish that I was dead?
In prison with nothing to lose, I joined a program, A.V.P.
It went smooth.

Two lovely ladies, who had nothing to prove,
Mix'n it with some real bad dudes.
Smash'n through walls, opening eyes,
Show'n us there's better things
Than just being bad guys.

So much deception, so many lies,
Who am I kidding?
I'm in prison with all these guys.
A bit of hope, in a place with so much hate,
Shows that violence
Doesn't have to be our fate.

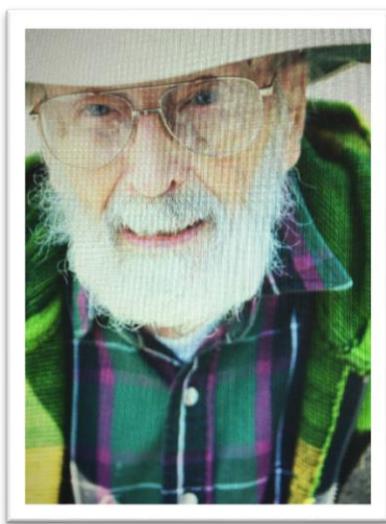
If you pay attention and listen well,
It will show you things you've never seen before.
I guess there is hope after all.
A.V.P. smash'n down the wall.



Role Play poster from Alice Springs Prison participant.



Paper Tear from Alice Springs Prison Basic.



*Farewell to Bob Barns
(Bodacious Bob)
1926 – 2019*

*An AVP legend across the
USA and around the world.*

Causes, Choices, Consequences
From Acacia Basic Workshop August 2019

Root cause – You grew up in a dysfunctional family.

Scenario – You are now an adult. You come home from a long day at work, and your partner hasn't started making dinner yet. You are hungry and tired.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Habitual choice | Consequence based on this choice |
| Yell at her "WHERE'S DINNER?" | No dinner. Arguments. |
| A better choice | Consequence based on this choice |
| Help make dinner. Make it yourself. | Fed ready for bed. |

Root cause – You never felt you were loved as a child.

Scenario – You are now an adult. You have your first steady girlfriend, and it seems like the first time in your life that you have been loved. She comes over one day and tells you it's over because she loves someone else.

| | |
|---|---|
| Habitual choice | Consequence based on this choice |
| Angry upset, use drugs, lash out, hookers, gambling. Drinking, strippers, grasp at straws, feel sorry for yourself. | Jail, charges, VRO, bad health. No progress. Instability. Financial loss. |
| A better choice | Consequence based on this choice |
| Be happy for her, talk it out. Get closure, go for a run. Positive thinking. | Better outcome. Healthy lifestyle. Move on. Get over it. |

Root cause – You grew up in a war-torn country then came to live in Australia as a refugee.

Scenario – You are now an adult. You are standing in line at a check-out. A man pushes in front of you saying, “Why don’t you go back where you came from and let us have our country back?”

| Habitual choice | Consequence based on this choice |
|---|--|
| “Fuck you!” Tell him to come outside. Yell abuse. Throw shopping at him. Slap him. Punch him. | Police presence. Locked up. Jail. Injuries. Embarrassment. Hospitalisation. Criminal record. Banned from shops. Negative role modelling. |
| A better choice | Consequence based on this choice |
| Ignore him. Ask him politely not to discriminate. Walk away. Passive. Make it yourself. | NO trouble. NO police. NO charges / criminal record. NO jail time. NO scene. NO injuries. Get home safe. |

Root cause – You grew up with drug addicted and violent parents.

Scenario – You are now in high school. You feel angry with your parents and the world. Someone offers you some cheap drugs. You have been saving for a new computer game, and have just enough money for the drugs.

| Habitual choice | Consequence based on this choice |
|--|--|
| Follower. To buy drugs. Spend saved money. Share the drugs. The anger turning into negativity. Creates addictions. | Addiction. Bad habits. Selfishness. Negative environment. Jail. Unhealthy. Mental illness. Stealing to provide drug habit. |
| A better choice | Consequence based on this choice |
| Not buy drugs. Stick to your goal. Buy the computer game. Healthier / safer choice. Isolated from parents. Learnt from parents mistakes. | Healthy. Safe. Pro-social. Positive thinking. |

Root cause – You grew up in poverty.

Scenario – You are now an adult. Your partner comes home from a shopping spree and says she has bought an expensive new dress. You think she has plenty of clothes and the purchase seems unnecessary to you.

| Habitual choice | Consequence based on this choice |
|--|---|
| “ARE YOU SERIOUS? You have plenty of clothes!” | Argument. Silent treatment. Trust issues. |
| A better choice | Consequence based on this choice |
| Sit down talk about it discuss finances and if it’s really needed and fits the budget. | Trust, honesty, positive communication. Happy wife. Happy life! 😊 |

Editor’s note

A newsletter is published every quarter, so if you have any news, photos, or new things you’ve tried in workshops, including inmate contributions, please send them to Selene Moonbeams.

selenemoonbeams@gmail.com

Need more information?

For details of upcoming workshops or training, to volunteer to help facilitate a workshop, or just to find out more about AVP, please contact our administrator Mark Newhouse.

0400 231 151
avp.wa1@gmail.com