

AVP WA NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2022



Upcoming Workshops

Feb 1 – 3: Karnet Prison Basic

Feb 12 – 14: Acacia (Mainstream) Basic

Feb 15 – 17: Bunbury Regional Prison Basic

Feb 21 – 23: Wooroloo Prison Basic

Mar 19, 26: Community Advanced – Mount Lawley

Mar 19 – 21: Acacia (Protection) Basic

Mar 28 – 30: Wooroloo Prison Basic

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 5th February: 9.00am – Quaker Meeting House

Acacia Prison Training Day

Saturday Feb 26: 9.30am – 3pm

If you'd like to be involved in any of these, please contact Mark, our administrator (Details end of newsletter).

Farewell Roger Walmsley

Jim Thom

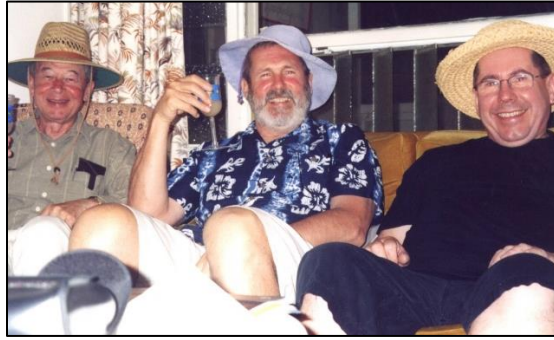
Roger Walmsley passed away on the 15th November. He was 91 years old and his death was sudden but not unexpected.

Roger was part of AVP from 1996 until 2008. He was on the management committee and chairperson from 1998 – 2001. He and I trained together and his enthusiasm and mentorship played a large part in motivating me to continue with AVP. We used to have regular coffees down by Matilda Bay where we would discuss AVP issues.

One thing I learned from Roger was to take transforming power seriously. I used to be slightly embarrassed presenting TP in workshops feeling the concept to be a little simplistic. During a community workshop when Roger and I were both on the team one of the participants commented “everybody knows this stuff” after my TP presentation. My heart sank but fortunately Roger came to my aid with the comment “You may know it, but do you *DO* it?”

Roger was a highly intelligent man. A professor of physics in fact. But he was also very kind, a great listener with a wonderful sense of humour. I once told him that I watched an SBS documentary on String Theory and just did not get it. His comment was that it must have been poorly explained, the unspoken assumption being that there was nothing wrong with my intellect! Phew!!

During his time in WA we got to know Roger's immediate family well; his wife Tricia and daughter Elizabeth. It was sad news for us to learn that they were returning to the States to be closer to other members of Roger's family. We send our sympathy to Tricia and Elizabeth.



Roger (left), Peter Prisgrove and David Nourish at an AVP gathering at Peter Fry and Jo Vallentine's house Rangī Marie in Guilderton.

SOME AVP WA ACHIEVEMENTS in 2021

Jim Thom

- Have run workshops (about 40) – our core business
- Training session in and out of prison
- Trained many inmate and outmate facilitators
- Had regular committee meetings and training sessions all that time
- Maintained a current website
- Maintained an active Facebook page
- Circulated regular newsletters to facilitators and supporters
- Considered and responded to last year's ECU report
- Wrestled with prison clearances and decided not to charge for prison workshops
- A treasurer managing several different accounts
- A part time administrator
- Applied for and received funding
- Committee Health Check - Mandala
- Participated in online national and international gatherings
- Written concise manuals for training
- Produced written policies and procedures
- Sat on national and international committees

AVP Lebanon

Gracious Grazyna

I am sure that you are aware of the desperate situation in Lebanon, where an already difficult situation has been made much worse by recent events. Currently, there is a lack of food, medicines, petrol, electricity, etc., causing increasing levels of insecurity, frustration and many layers of suppressed and overt anger and violence. A situation crying out for the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP).

Two very successful, Level 1, Alternatives to Violence (AVP) workshops were held in Lebanon in October/November last year, with support from a Jordanian facilitator and two Iraqi facilitators. On the ground logistics were organised by War-Child-Lebanon, which contributed a venue, materials and accommodation for the facilitators. The success of these workshops has created a lot of interest and a demand for more workshops. And nowhere could need them more!

We hope eventually to train AVP facilitators in Lebanon so that Lebanon can be self-sufficient in terms of AVP. In the meantime, with support from Jordan and Iraq, we can certainly organise enough facilitators for more workshops. War-Child will provide some support for further workshops but is not able to provide the same level of support as last time. The present request is for two more workshops – one Level 1 and a Level 2.

Please contact me (grazyna.bonati@gmail.com) if you would like to support this initiative.

International Peace Day

Sally Herzfeld

A celebration was held at Darlington on 19th September. AVP facilitators were involved in several ways:

Gus and Bheena held the AVP flag at the back,

Greg and his wife Liz held the Peace flag.

Greg intrigued the crowd by leading us all in a Tug of Peace.

This is the second year that Manita and I have organised the event.



Training Day Sat 2nd Oct 2021

Jim Thom

We considered several topics at this training session.

We looked at the exercise Carefronting which can be found in the advanced manual. This is presented as a long process in which the simple carefronting message can get lost. Carefronting is an important concept of “confronting with care.”

We tried out a method using role play scenarios for people to experience both confronting and carefronting followed by a discussion on the tendency of confronting to produce conflict and carefronting to lead to more positive outcomes.

Then we talked about facilitation skills. We discussed the issues relating to processing exercises and setting up role plays. Both of these processes can be done badly and both can be done well. As facilitators it is our responsibility to strive towards best practice. Points raised were that during processing it is important to ask open questions, to carefully listen to and consider the responses, to allow silences if appropriate and to give adequate time for thorough processing. For role play set up it is important that we give clear instructions to the groups regarding the role play process, that facilitators are well prepared, that they observe and guide the group as they develop their scenario (ensuring there is a possibility of TP) and that they can competently debrief and de-role after the play.

For both processing exercises and role plays a critical factor is that the facilitator ensures they are well prepared prior to the activity.

We re-viewed part of Nadine Hoover’s presentation on trauma awareness specifically the gathering “How Violence has affected my life...” We asked Nadine if it was wise to sometimes modify this gathering to suit the group and reduce trauma. Her response was that she felt it important to include it as it is central to the workshop theme.

Two points arose. Firstly it is important to stress that is about the effect of violence and not about the feelings, emotions and memories that still surround it. Secondly it may be a good idea for the facilitator introducing the gathering to caution the participants that it can be a challenging topic and to speak about something that they feel will not be too traumatic.

In small groups we considered:

a) What are we doing well and what could we do better?

For doing well we had – training days that are relevant to all facilitators, building community, positively affecting people’s lives, have good reputation in the prisons, the waiting lists reflects the enthusiasm.

For doing better – Maybe change the training day to just half a day, how do we assess our effect? Need to emphasise to inmates how they can contribute on the outside, encourage all facilitators to do at least one workshop each year.

b) AVP future initiatives: what should we aim for in the future?

Better marketing and publicity, pamphlets and word of mouth, social media. Involve the Shire and politicians, keep in contact with our facilitators, run a survey of facilitators, ask if inmates want to be contacted after release, more contributions to the newsletter, hold training in different areas, foster links with Australia and International AVP, more workshops with schools and aboriginal communities.

Overall it was a good day and some of these initiatives will be considered by the committee.

Letters to self

Inmates

Fuck mate how you’ve become such a fuck up your now 38 years old and your in prison yes that’s right mate prison you are a father of 6 four that are your own and you have 2 step kids oh and you’ve been married but your not with her anymore you are with your beautiful soul mate so you are so lucky to have her

You’ve finally taken some serious steps to never using violence or alcohol and drugs again so if I could give you some advice dont practise what your currently seeing at home right now and say no to drugs and alcohol cause from your current age til now both drugs and alcohol has played some part of what situation your in right now (prison)

You don’t speak with your mother or step father coz you finally figured out they are trouble well your mother is not so much your dad

Anyways champ good luck and see you.

To myself stay away from drugs stick to your work you’re a hard worker a smart kid chase your dreams find love settle down have a few kids love and cherish them till the end of time try not fight as much walk away from it believe in yourself and who you are not what other people want you to be keep your head up keep moving forward your life has only just begun.

Listen up king stay off the meth be careful who you trust because 75% of fuckers are dogs. Trust me because I’m the future you sitting in jail doing an AVP course.

P.S. Don’t drive around with kilos in the car for fuck sake!!

And pull ya head in and make a future for you and your son. Contratulations by the way you’re a father.

TP story

An inmate

- I woke up to a lot of yelling / raised voices. when I walked outside, I found a young man arguing and trying to fight a man well into his 60s.
- I had no idea why the arguing started or who started it.
- My first thought was what's going on, then why would a young man want to hur an elderly man.
- I stepped in between them both and asked for them to stop and calm down.
- I spoke to the young man, reminding him of the age difference / physicalities.
- He didn't care.
- I then told him think about your grandad and how you would feel if this was happening to him.
- His response was I would smash the young fella.
- I asked why - because he's an old man he responded.
- I said I rest my case. if it's not ok for it to happen to your grandad, then why are you doing the very same thing?
- I don't know if they became friends or even spoke again but the arguing stopped.

Editor's note

A newsletter is published every quarter.
If you have any news, photos, inmate contributions or new things you've tried in workshops, please send them to our newsletter editor 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.
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