

Alternatives to Violence Project WA (AVP-WA)

Newsletter



Winter 2018



International Night at AVP

The theme for our June training night was 'International'. Facilitators and guests came dressed in national costume, brought an amazing international smorgasbord for supper and displayed artefacts from their family's country of origin. The countries represented included Australia, Scotland, England, Wales, Egypt and New Zealand.

We were very pleased to welcome three new facilitators, Kymble, Raima and Angus to their first training night. Daniel, who also recently completed his T4F, was unable to attend but we look forward to seeing him again soon. It was also good to welcome back Maureen after her stay in Albany

Mark and Sue shared more of their trip to the Kathmandu International Gathering in 2017 with a colourful photo slideshow, plus information about diversity, the role of AVP after the 2015 Nepal earthquake, different ways of presenting Transforming Power and AVP and the brain.

The closing for the evening was a rendition of "I am Australian" with a new AVP chorus penned by Sally.

*We are one, but we are many
Spreading love around the world
We share ideas and presentations
I do, you do
We all do AVP.*



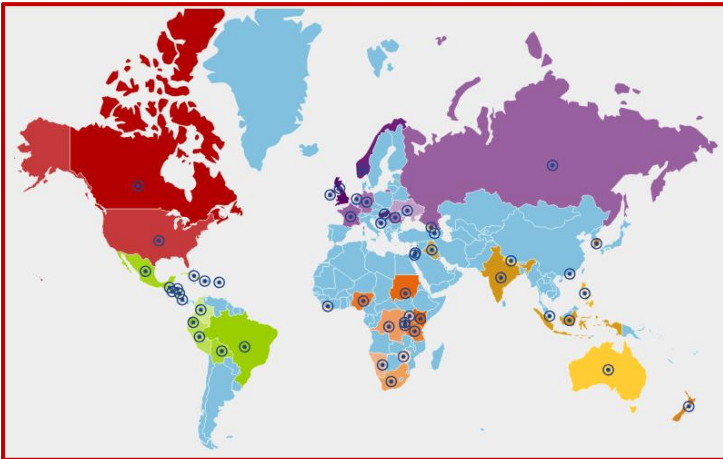
Peaceful Pathways to Conflict Resolution

Osborne Park Community Basic Workshop – August 2018

AVP-WA is holding a Community Basic Workshop in Osborne Park over two Saturdays, **18th and 25th August**. If you know of anyone who may be interested in attending, please direct them to Mark 0400 231151 marknewh@inet.net.au or www.avpwa.org for further information.

International News

Since its beginnings in Green Haven Prison, New York in 1975, AVP is now established in over fifty countries. Here is a snapshot of what is happening around the world.



If you have internet access, you can find this map at <https://avp.international/avp-around-the-world/>

You can then click on the blue dots for more information about AVP in that country.



USA National Gathering

The 2018 AVP USA National Gathering was in Richmond, Indiana, in over the Memorial Day long weekend in May. The gathering included sessions on Youth Leadership, Mentorship and Trauma Resilience, as well as a visit to Plainfield, the co-founder of 'Life after Hate', and organisation founded by former violent extremists, who are now committed to compassion, education and countering hate and discrimination -

<https://www.lifeafterhate.org/>

If you look closely at this photo, you may spot AVPWA facilitator Merril, who attended the Gathering.



AVP Jordan

In April, twenty participants completed Basic and Advanced workshops facilitated by AVP Jordan, and all are keen to attend a T4F workshop. AVP Jordan facilitators were assisted by from England and USA.

AVP Colombia

From 2006 to 2016, AVP Colombia completed over 300 workshops, impacting more than 2,500 participants. Youth have been a priority population for AVP Colombia as well as victims of armed violence, 75% of whom are women. Workshops continue with communities in indigenous and Afro-Colombian territories located in the coastal and southwestern regions.



AVP Britain

AVP Britain have shared the story of Paul who is a new AVP facilitator.

“Paul took part in our workshops while in Addiewell Prison. Paul is one of our newly trained facilitators and has shared his reasons for volunteering with AVP Scotland. As an ex-offender with a violent background he had struggled with conflict – both in prison and outside. Paul’s story is sadly typical of many people who want to change, he’d attended various courses and tried hard to stay away from trouble, but it was only after attending our workshops that he found the tools that really helped him.

After his release Paul was able to move away from his previous lifestyle and to take responsibility for communicating his needs appropriately. He recognised that how people interact with each other – the tone of voice they use or body language they display – was actually the ‘tip of the iceberg’, and so he was more able to step aside from conflict rather than engage with it. He’s become more observant of people’s behaviour and so become more tolerant of them. This change in Paul has not gone unnoticed! He’s had very positive feedback from his friends and he is making progress in resolving the conflict in his own family.”

Do you have a story to share? Let us know.



AVP Nepal

AVP Nepal facilitators spent time in April working on their Strategic Plan. Throughout June they have been conducting AVP Basic Workshops in a number of schools.



AVP Kenya

AVP started in Kenya in 2003 and has been growing steadily. AVP facilitators are active in both urban and rural area, including in slums, in Shimo la Tewa prison in Mombasa and the Kamiti prison in Nairobi, also with religious communities and with refugees. Violence in schools and colleges has been a major concern and some workshops have been held for students in Thika and at the Friends School in Dandora, Nairobi. Many workshops have been held in Western Kenya and the Rift Valley among communities that have experienced serious conflicts. Facilitators continue trying to bring together people from different ethnic communities.

If you could write a letter to your teenage self, what would it say?



Western Australia

Many thanks to our Acacia workshop participants for these insights. We are privileged that you have shared your reflections with us.

Even though right now you may not realise how important school is and that your friends and good times mean more to you. I want you to know that you will always have plenty of time to make friends and have fun when you have succeeded in life with a good education and good career. Remember also that family comes first! Nothing ever comes in between. It's not how bad you fall it's how many times you stand up.

Just a short letter to let you know that it's not best that you use the drugs you've come across. As well as hang around some of the people you're gonna meet. I am writing you this letter from jail where all of the above has led me so say no to the drugs, steer clear from the dickheads, stay in school and you'll be right.

Don't waste your time being an idiot at school and do your own thing, stay away from drugs and bad friends, that shit isn't cool. And be a good son to your parents, you're their only boy and make them proud, you're a smart boy make smarter choices and be honest to your parents and love them and look after your sisters, make something of yourself

Wake up a bit to yourself and quit using drugs you're about to be a father and don't buy a whole heap of winter clothes for him he'll be born in summer dickhead. Also women come and go don't get so hung up on them and waste so many opportunities being stupid after a break up. Do more for your mum she is the best.

Please do not take drugs 'cause it will ruin your life, you will be in and out of jail and rehabs your whole life and do not drink alcohol either because it will ruin your health. Make sure you do an apprenticeship in something so you will always have a good well paid job or you will always find it hard to find a job you like. Take care of your family and always tell them you love them cause you never know when you're gonna see them again.

First find laughter, find trust. Look to have some fun! Look and find good mates to help you and you to help them. Be true to you and yours. Be mindful of how others see you and to your actions. Look after YOU. Have dreams and go for them BUT make sure you are in the right side of the law. Widen the circle of your friends, you can't have enough. Find a good partner and be true and truthful to them. If you are threatened stop, draw a breath, think of the consequences before you act.

Love and treat A with so much respect, she will do anything for you. Nothing positive will come out of using drugs and doing crime. I mean nothing. Do not trust everyone you meet in life and please try your best in finding a job you like cos you will be having four beautiful sons who need you to be a part of their life. Don't lose A, she is your love of your life.

Pls follow my advice and I promise you will have a great life. Use protection and wait till you meet the real love of your life before you have kids. Don't be too keen to lend things, make sure you can trust them. Pay attention at school and get a better job. When you get your licence don't get used or be everyone's taxi. Don't drive past B TAFE on L Ave because that's where I had a car smash. And most important learn from your mistakes.

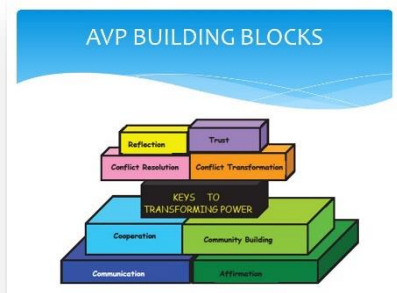
I am writing to let you know what to look for in life. You always have been good at sports keep it up as one day you will regret giving it up. When it comes to relationships don't wear your heart on your sleeve. And never take drugs they will lead you into a life of suffering. Learn to accept rejection as it is a part of life. Always listen to your mum as she is right no matter what and let her know how much she means to you. Really be true to yourself don't be a follower and always look for better ways to deal with people.

Don't blame yourself for the abuse that you were a victim of because it's not you, were a victim. It's not your fault. Stay in school and think before you act on things. What you think is cool now will not get you far in life for example drugs and crime. Always remember to love yourself.

Transforming Power

Everyone has their own way of understanding and expressing Transforming Power. Here, AVP facilitator Lucy, from Queensland, shares her perception.

“It was Day Two of a Basic Workshop that I recently co-facilitated. We had an open and fun-loving group of about sixteen people. It was my turn to refer to where we were on the map with respect to our Building Blocks and the ground that we’d covered to get here.



A quiet member of the group asked:

What is Transforming Power?

My response then was to refer to the mandala and say that Transforming Power is at the heart of our practice and that it is activated when the other parts of the mandala are practiced. In other words, I said, when we practice ‘Respect for Self’ for example, or ‘Think before Reacting’, we awaken or activate the power of transforming a situation and indeed ourselves.

Later on, well after the workshop, I reflected on my response and indeed my understanding of Transforming Power.

As I often share in my Meditation Circles and classes and the Meditation based workshops that I run, Awareness or Presence is itself transformational. In a moment of Awareness/Presence, we bypass the discursive mind and its judgmental and reactive habits.

The state of non-judgment is the state of Love/Awareness/Truth. And so, the momentary suspension of our tendency to judge/react returns us to our natural state of Love and the response thereof is a loving, non-violent response.

So, it occurred to me that ‘Be Present/Presence’ or ‘Be Aware/Awareness’ could be one of the petals of the mandala. Certainly for me, this is by far the most powerful doorway to TP.

On the other hand, Transforming Power may be AVP’s term for Presence/Awareness!

I wonder what thoughts you have on this.

Peace is All”



A culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can only be achieved with systematic education for peace.” – Hague Appeal for Peace Global Campaign for Peace Education

AVP WA Workshops



The sun was shining on the second day of our T4F workshop in Darlington in May. Our community building exercise was to build a “culture sculpture” from items found around the venue. What a creative bunch!



It was lovely to get outside and breathe some fresh ‘hills’ air!



AVP WA has now held two very successful Community Basic workshops in Bunbury, with an Advanced workshop being held on 4th and 5th August.

Our generous hosts are Doors Wide Open. Doors Wide Open is a not-for-profit organisation providing access to a variety of services and resources to help people recover from addiction. They also provide a place for friends and family to have access to resources and services to help them to cope with their loved ones addiction, and to have a greater understanding of their addiction. You can find out more about them here

<http://www.doorswideopen.net/>

AVP Online

AVP Western Australia website <http://avpwa.org/>

This is a great place to refer people who are interested in finding about more AVP. Here you will find information about the history of AVP, the types of workshops facilitate, future workshop dates and other useful information. No log in is required.

AVP International website <http://avp.international/>

AVP Western Australia on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/AVPWA/>

Need more information?

For details of upcoming workshops or training nights, to volunteer to help facilitate a workshop, or just to find out more about AVP, please contact Mark (Administrator) 0400 231 151 or marknewh@iinet.net.au

Any contributions to the newsletter would be very much appreciated. Please email Sue susan.mulholland@bigpond.com

Thank you to our workshop participants for their contributions to this issue.