

Spring, 2013

What being an AVP facilitator means to me...

Nine inside (incarcerated) facilitators, ten outside (civilian) facilitators, one outside participant and AVP staff advisor Mr. Bob Zabel celebrated Forum Day at Sullivan Prison on April 20th. The home team planned the day. We began with this gathering.



Being an AVP Facilitator to me means being dedicated and committed in helping others learn the techniques of living a positive and productive life—by presenting them with the tools of “Transforming Power.” Being part of the AVP legacy is a rewarding experience.

—Joyous Jay a.k.a. Juan Perez



Being an AVP Facilitator means that I am now part of the solution and not the problem. It means that I am connecting myself with a group of my peers and community volunteers that are willing and able to work to make a positive change in the Superhero

—Hip Hop Holmes a.k.a. William Holmes,
Inside AVP Coordinator at Sullivan



Being an AVP Facilitator to me is giving back. Through service, I set the law of giving and receiving into motion and I am blessed in return. It's like trying to change the world one session at a time.

—Resilient Ro a.k.a. Roland Roberts



Being an AVP Facilitator means commitment, dedication, empathy, understanding etc.—not only in the workshop. One must live through the same commitment daily by showing example to others with transforming power. On a whole, to me, AVP is like the central point or axis about which my world spins.

—Chili Chao a.k.a. James Chao



Being an AVP Facilitator is “exhilarating” and rewarding in the sense that in each and every workshop something new and fulfilling is said or shared about life obstacles. In a word: “OUTSTANDING!”

—Airborne Al a.k.a. Alton Lee



Being an AVP Facilitator is like conducting a train on a journey of enlightenment. As the passengers chart through new terrain they experience territory previously unexplored. During the journey, all aboard come to realize that life has a lot to offer and there is great opportunity on the horizon. The conductor pulls into station and hands the controls to the passengers. For they now have the experience and tools needed to conduct their own peaceful journey.

—Sure Shareef a.k.a. Rinaldo Clark



Being an AVP Facilitator to me means: learning how to become a caterpillar—go through its growth process until I become a butterfly, then help others to see God's plan for them is the same!

—Jambo Jah-Myke a.k.a. Michael Bilbrew



It means having a commitment to the betterment of my community, helping to shape the minds of those who lack patience and providing them with new tools needed to prosper in our community!

—Born Black a.k.a. Earl Jefferson



It's the drive, the motivation toward perpetuating truth and in the end positioning myself as an example of what is right and in seeking the resources to think and to be active in my thinking.

—Kind Kareem a.k.a. Todd Williams



Being an AVP Facilitator means that I am more than a rock in the stream of life where the world flows over and around me. I am more like a weir that redirects the flow of the stream to be more productive and a benefit for everyone. To be a facilitator I am made conscious in a world asleep and challenged to awaken others to the opportunity of a good, happy life that awaits us all. Life is good. Believe it!

—Vital Vince a.k.a. Vince Sanborn,
Outside AVP Coordinator at Sullivan

Please support AVP!!

AVP New York's 2013 budget totals \$40,750.

To date we have received \$13,464.

We greatly appreciate all contributions in all sizes.

Thank you very much !

Forum Day 2013: R3

By Michael Bilbrew a.k.a. Jambo Jah-Myke

Bob Zabel



AVP/NY's Forum Day at Sullivan Prison. Concentric Circles.

Bob Zabel



Trying out a new exercise by Hip Hop Holmes (William Holmes): "My Vibe or Yours."

Bob Zabel



Front row (left to right): Sure Shareef (Rinaldo Clark), Jambo Jah-Myke (Michael Bilbrew), Born Black (Earl Jefferson), Hip Hop Holmes (William Holmes) and Vital Vince (Sanborn).

Middle row (left to right): Resilient Ro (Roland Roberts), Sure Shirley (Way), Morningstar Margaret (Lechner), Contagious CC (Carolyn Polikarpus), Lively Liz (Jennings), Magical Mary Beth (Gamba) and Joyous Jay (Juan Perez).

Back row (left to right): Genuine John (Gallagher), Empathetic Etta (Roebig), Jumpin' Jill (McLellan), Radical Ray (Rios), Airborne Al (Alton Lee) and Peaceful Pat (Patrick Ryan).



April 20, 2013 was a "hold your breath" day for the "Home Team." For the first time AVP/NY held its annual Forum Day at Sullivan Correctional Facility and the preparations were tedious. One minute clarity smoothly moved days along. The next, uncertainty rendered the Home Team legally blind. The theme for the day "**R3**"—**Reestablish, Revitalize and Reloaded** was created by the Home Team. The Home Team consisted of six gold-certified facilitators: Juan Perez a.k.a. Joyous Jay, William Hip Hop Holmes, James Chilly Choa, Rinaldo Clark a.k.a. Sure Shareef, Roland Roberts a.k.a. Resilient Ro and me, Michael Bilbrew a.k.a. Jambo Jah-Myke, and three apprentice facilitators—Earl Jefferson a.k.a. Born Black, Alton Lee a.k.a. Airborne Al and Todd Williams a.k.a. Kind Kareem. (Resilient Ro and Jambo Jah-Myke received their golds on this day!) Special thanks go to staff advisor, Mr. Robert Zabel—the cushion, catalyst and motivation of the Home Team.

The day began with sincere smiles and handshakes. After the gathering, the Home Team introduced a new exercise: "AVP Oscar Moment." Each facilitator, outside facilitators included, had an opportunity to accept a make-shift award on behalf of another facilitator, explaining why they chose that person and what that person would say to encourage the group. Memories and personal stories were shared, which definitely **Reestablished** the spirit of AVP.

To replenish the energy spent, a break was taken to feast upon turkey burgers with all the toppings and spicy fries.

Hip Hop Holmes then introduced the group to "My Vibe or Yours," an exercise he created that **Revitalized** the purpose of and need for AVP. Facilitators were broken up into groups evenly. One member of each group was asked to leave their group and then return intent upon negatively disrupting the group's positive vibe. The group was required to remain positive and attempt to draw the negative person into their positive vibe. After a few minutes, two participants were asked to depart, then return fixated upon disturbing their groups' positive vibe. This continued until only one positive-thinking person remained in each of the groups and it was his/her job to sway the returning negative group into a positive conversation. Although it would have been ideal for the positive people to have successfully negated the negative vibes, it was arduous. When two of the last positive people in their groups realized they that they could not persuade change, they opted to leave their groups and share the company of the other. It was truly comical and insightful at the same time. Sometimes you have to seek peace for yourself.

It was a day of sharing ideas and connecting the spirit of AVP.

A very special "Thank You" goes out to Lively Liz, Empathetic Etta and Contagious Carolyn for their willingness to come in and bless us with their experiences [in future workshops]. None of you will regret your decision and the Home Team looks forward to working with all of you. With you all in chamber with us, we are definitely **Reloaded!**

In closing, Merciful Mary Ann Burke [former outside AVP coordinator] was honored continuously and she deserved every wonderfully spoken word. It was a beautiful experience. At the end of the day, there were smiles, handshakes and hugs of encouragement. Priceless! Therefore, the day received

Making a Difference in Mount Vernon

A story about the Alternatives to Violence Project in action to help keep young people out of prison.

By Fred Feucht a.k.a. Friendly Fred



On Wednesday, December 12, 2012, I was at Thornton High School in the heart of the ‘hood’ with Jerry Jones, who had just been released from prison seven days earlier. We brought with us an “AVP Tool Kit” that contained the “Twenty-Five to Life” DVD, a Transforming Power Mandala and cards with the TP Mandala on one side and the Guides to Transforming Power on the other side.

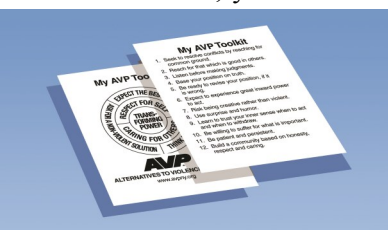
This was the fourth class that we had covered this day as we showed the “Twenty-Five to Life” documentary created by Helen Dillon, an AVP facilitator. Twenty-five teenagers were glued to the screen as six ex-inmates told how their negative choices led them to prison. The twenty-minute documentary portrayed the harsh reality of prison life. The teacher remarked, “I have never seen them this quiet during a video.” The kids seemed to be hooked.

Mount Vernon is a middle class African American community with many hard working people but it is also a city that is filled with guns and drugs. When the class was asked if they knew anyone who was in jail, nearly every hand went up. Prison had affected nearly every family. The goal of the workshop was to help keep these teenagers out of jail.

This was an English class and the walls were covered with posters about novels and plays including “The Glass Menagerie” and “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.”

I began to talk about conflict and asked the teenagers, “How many of you like conflict?” Only one hand went up. I asked, “How many would like to see a world without conflict?” and all the hands went up. I asked who had seen a movie, read a novel, or seen a stage play in the last year and many hands went up.

“If I took the conflict out of the movie and novel and stage play, would you have read the novel or gone to the play?” The kids said “No” and the teacher agreed, “Without conflict, you don’t have a story.” The students



realized that although they did not like conflict they loved stories about conflict. I pointed to the Tennessee Williams posters and asked, “What are the two types

of stage plays?” One girl piped up, “Comedy and tragedy.”

I explained that the difference between a comedy and a tragedy is about how the conflict is resolved. “You just saw a documentary about six people who made tragedies of their lives... What the Alternatives to Violence Project is to me is to make my life a comedy rather than a tragedy.” This seemed to hit home.

I pulled the Transforming Power Mandala out of the “AVP Toolkit” and explained the Transforming Power Mandala as Jonesy handed out the Transforming Power cards.

Jonesy then picked up a TP card and read the first item, “We seek to resolve differences by reaching common ground” and commented, “That’s not going to happen here, right?” The kids laughed.

Jonesy spoke about an experience he had in the Sing Sing yard. Another inmate had hit him in the face just after he left the phone bank. Immediately 300 inmates chose sides and crews began to form. This could have easily led to a war in the yard.

Jonesy took his TP card out of his wallet and read it. Instead of reacting and striking back as the hundreds of inmates in the yard expected, Jonesy went to the inmate who hit him and said, “I forgive you for hitting me.”

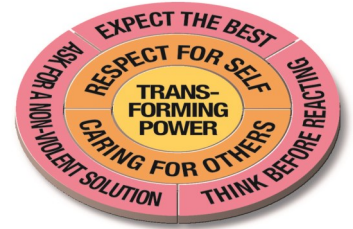
Other inmates were really impressed that Jonesy avoided a war and asked Jonesy, “How did you learn to do that?” Jonesy replied that he learned to do that in AVP. Dozens of inmates at Sing Sing signed up for the AVP program after this incident.

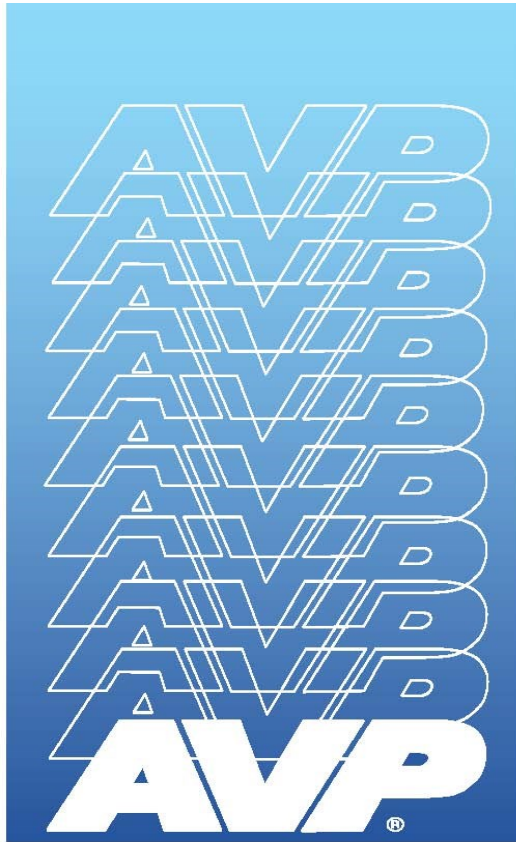
The twenty-five teenagers in the room got the message. After the class, the teacher asked where she could get the “Twenty-Five to Life” documentary.

This was just one class in a five-day program organized by the Parents Against Teen Violence Program in Mount Vernon. AVP teams covered four other middle and high schools during the week and reached over 300 teenagers. AVP is making a difference in Mount Vernon.

Call for Volunteers

AVP has an urgent need for volunteers as facilitators for prison and community workshops. To be part of this dynamic program and for more information about AVP facilitator training, please contact Shirley Way at the AVP New York Office. Phone: 800-909-8940 or 315-604-7940 or e-mail: info@avpny.org.





ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

Note: Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper.

Ray Rios



Training for Facilitators Workshop

Participants and facilitators.
Brooklyn, NY
April 20-21, 2013

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
King Ferry, NY 13081
Permit No. 13383

Save the Date!
AVP/NY's Annual Gathering!

Powell House, Old Chatham, NY
September 6-8, 2013



Return Service Requested

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT / NEW YORK

2012 Workshop Summary Report

Note: These statistics represent the workshops reported to the AVP/NY office.

ALBION Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 7 Apprentices trained: 7	GREEN HAVEN Prison English lang. wksp. count: 20 Spanish lang. wksp. count: 2 Participant count: 252 Apprentices trained: 21	WOODBOURNE Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 86 Apprentices trained: 8	NIAGARA FRONTIER AC Workshop count: 6 Youth participant count: 22 Adult participant count: 58 Apprentices trained: 8 Mini Youth workshop count: 4 Mini Youth part't count: 45
ATTICA Prison Workshop count: 8 Participant count: 91 Apprentices trained: 5	GREENE Prison Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 66	ALBANY Area Council Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 22 Apprentices trained: 7	WESTCHESTER Area Council Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 22 Mini Youth workshop count: 21 Mini Youth part't count: 412
AUBURN Prison Workshop count: 15 Participant count: 244 Apprentices trained: 4	GROVELAND Prison Workshop count: 12 Participant count: 171 Apprentices trained: 17	BRONX Area Council Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 28	YTD 2012 PRISON WRSPs: Prisons served: 15 Prison workshops: 139 Participant count: 1,680 Apprentices trained: 120 Inside facilitators: 165 Inside support: 17
BEDFORD HILLS Prison (W's) English lang. wksp. count: 5 Spanish lang. wksp. count: 1 Participant count: 34 Apprentices trained: 5	OTISVILLE Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 110 Apprentices trained: 18	CATSKILL Area Council Workshop count: 2 Youth participant count: 30 Youth apprentices trained: 14 Mini Youth workshop count: 13 Mini Youth part't count: 300	YTD 2012 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS: Community workshops: 26 Participant count: 290 Mini Youth workshops: 38 Mini Youth part't count: 757 Apprentices trained: 33 Outside adult facilitators: 84 Outside youth facilitators: 10
BUTLER Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 44 Apprentices trained: 4	SING SING Prison English lang. wksp count: 24 Spanish lang. wksp. count: 3 Participant count: 257 Apprentices trained: 8	ELMIRA Area Council Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 9	
CAYUGA Prison Workshop count: 9 Participant count: 66 Apprentices trained: 7	SULLIVAN Prison Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 74	GENESEEE VALLEY AC Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 52 Apprentices trained: 11	
EASTERN Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 86 Apprentices trained: 16	WENDE Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 92	NYC Area Council Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 47	