

Spring, 2014

Walking the Walk

Forum Day at Groveland prison.



A typical day in prison, I greet and I'm greeted by a bunch of people. Many of the men I see in the programs I facilitate, nothing more. AVP workshops have allowed me to connect on a deep personal level with some of these men in a safe environment.

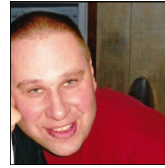
The energy we create during a workshop is transformative. In a matter of minutes, I'm transformed from an incarcerated person to a human being. The feeling is expansive. In this space, I acknowledge the common ground with my peers. We all share the desire for freedom, for being with our loved ones, the chance to make our own choices, to have privacy, to learn and to grow. Along with the outside volunteers, we affirm each other. We ask for empathy from each other to help understand our own problems. I feel comfortable sharing a conflict I solved nonviolently and I am nurtured by the transforming power rap. We communicate, laugh, smile a lot, and have fun.

Walking the walk of transforming power is the positive energy I feel during an AVP workshop. I want to carry it within me days, weeks, months after the workshop. Transforming power enables me to communicate to the goodness in people. Walking the walk is also about working on the issues that prevent me from communicating to the goodness in me.

There is always an AVP workshop coming up. I look forward to the affirmations, the revitalizing energy. The path we are on together is better than a destination, and when it intertwines with AVP volunteers throughout New York State, as it did during Forum Day, April 12, 2014 at Groveland Correctional Facility, the walk takes on a global perspective. Forum Day gave me the opportunity to see how challenging the walk is and yet, how rewarding and life changing it has been for people inside and outside. It gave meaning to the term AVP family. I was attending a family reunion, meeting family members I had never seen before. However, I felt like I knew them my whole life. We spoke as if we knew each other, the miracle of transforming power is, we do—goodness recognizes goodness.

When I greet a person after an AVP workshop, it's more genuine. We're affirming the goodness in each other.

—*Journeying Jonathon, Jonathon Jones,
Inside AVP Co-Coordinator at Groveland*



Ahhh—Forum Day 2014 at Groveland!
What a beautiful time together with my family of AVP.

I have been involved with AVP for the past four years now. My love and experiences through workshops has grown deeply. I enjoy being in an environment where I'm not judged by what I have done but lifted up and appreciated for who I am.

Coming into prison I never saw myself as violent or even understood what it meant. I always looked at it as a physical state but it's so much broader. I have learned so much about myself through these workshops.

This Forum Day was filled with a lot of knowledge with our focus topic, "Walk the Walk". For me it's a life changing walk. Looking in the mirror and asking, "Am I showing others AVP?"

I want to thank all the facilitators from across the state for coming. I don't take it lightly of the new friends I have made. Thank you all for investing in me!

—*Jukebox Joe, Joe Wright
Inside AVP Co-Coordinator at Groveland*



Forum Day at Groveland Prison, April 12, 2014

Front row, left to right: "Neat Nelson" Rodriguez, "Journeying Jonathon" Jones, "Empathetic Etta" Roebig, "Bulldozer Bob" Robert Scone, Fredrick "Intelligent Idlet." Second row: "Energetic Eugene" Hayes, "Quintessential Kathryn" Slining Haynes, "Tolerant Tim" McNulty, "Amazin' Angel" Velez, "Perceptive Pamela" Hawkins, "Creative Charles" Bays. Third row: "Sure Shirley" Way, "Mindful Margaret" Lechner, "Humble Henry" Williams, "Dignified Dan" Beerbower, "Lucky Lili" MacCormick, "Righteous Rob" Evans, "Contagious CC" Carolyn Polikarpus, "Justice Jamel" Washington. Fourth row: "Talented Tino" Bellanca, "Sturdy Stuart" Bartram, "Magical Mary Beth" Gamba, "Jumpin' Jill" McLellan, "Priesthood Phillip" Becktoft. Top row: "Generous G." Brown, "Helpful Hector" Lanzo, "Justified Jeddy" Boone, "Blest Bill" Marx, "Positive Pete" Reiss, "Jukebox Joe" Wright.

Walking the Walk (cont'd.)



What AVP Means to Me?

It means the foundation of Peace, which is the absence and alternative to violence and confusion.

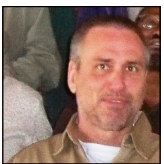
How I Walk the Walk?

I walk on the straight line of positivity by learning new ways to reduce the risk of doing something hurtful or criminal. I've learned to forget about mistakes I've made in the past because the lessons I'm learning through the Alternatives to Violence Project can and will prove valuable tomorrow, the following day and so on.

It's all about re-establishing myself and slowly eliminating the negative image I created in the youth that followed in my footsteps. How I mis-educated and misled them without even realizing the harm and damage that I caused. Because if my methods and actions of the past were correct, which they weren't, then there would be more inner-city kids going to college instead of prison. And more becoming doctors and lawyers instead of them becoming victims of drug abuse, murders, gang violence and the AIDS epidemic.

My way of walking the walk is to continue to practice, in my everyday life what I've learned and continue to learn in the AVP workshops, so that I could work on others, to become positive and productive individuals who can follow my new footsteps as I continue to walk the straight line of positive consistency for a better quality of life.

—*Intelligent Idlet, Fredrick Idlet*



What AVP and Forum Day mean to me.

AVP is my family. They let me know when I am doing good. They also let me know what area I could use a little help in. I use AVP in my every day life in prison and look forward to using it in my home life.

The way the outside facilitators and inside facilitators work together for the good of the group as a whole is amazing to see. I feel I am a better person when I use AVP. My family and friends already see the difference in me.

“Walking the Walk” to me is easy. Don't talk about it, Be about it.

Thank you so much.

—*Tolerant Tim, Tim McNulty*



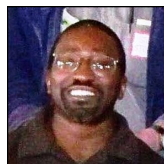
I had a great time with my AVP family at Forum Day. I learned at times we all feel inadequate to meet the tasks we are faced with. The responsibility of promoting the physical, psychological and spiritual development of another human being is a challenge beyond all others. Through the work of Transforming Power, this challenge can and will become easy.

We did a short role play about a workshop gone bad in which I was one of the actors. At the end of this short role play, the team resolved the issue using transforming power. So many important questions were asked but someone asked one that was more important than the others. The question was, “What do we tell the participants after such an incident?” I have really been thinking about this question. What I came up with is, explain to the participants that they saw transforming power first and point out the tools that were used to resolve the issue—just like when we debrief a role play.

This was a great learning experience for me because I actually have been in situations like this in a workshop and I know it may happen again for we are there to work on issues of violent behavior. “We are not perfect.”

Peace to all my AVP brothers and sisters all over the world.

—*Justice Jamel, Jamel Washington*



The Groveland Forum Day was an awesome event. I was amongst some of the top minds expressing their views, goals and inspirations to us facilitators from all over New York.

My understanding of “Walking the Walk” is having integrity, faith and love of volunteerism to help mankind think, act and work for non-violence. True affirmation, self-esteem, communication, community, unity and conflict management are the four building blocks of AVP.

I will always advocate for non-violence because AVP is my soul-enhancing activity that has lasting results from negative living to positive living. Plus I've stopped reacting to violent situations that would land me in the SHU [Special Housing Unit or solitary confinement], I'm definitely a better person for achieving this level of love for mankind, giving back to the community my time, effort and energy for enhancing people's view to do good.

Thank you for allowing me to take part in this event that will have a profound effect on my attitude and disposition to continue doing AVP!!

—*Humble Henry, Henry Williams*

Walking the Walk (cont'd.)



What AVP Means to Me:

AVP means I have a whole new family. AVP has shown me how to transform the power within me into something positive. AVP has many people from all walks of life. Once I took that first step into this project it has become my sole purpose. For outside of the fences there are people who need help in controlling their violence and their anger. That is where AVP comes into play. For we as a family do not discriminate. We accept anyone and everyone. Being a facilitator for AVP has made me realize that I have a purpose in life and that purpose is to show others that we can all get along.

Walk the Walk:

This theme for Forum Day was an eye-opener for all facilitators. When a person talks the talk does he really understand what being a facilitator actually means. For me when I say something I must know the facts before opening my mouth. When I walk the walk I tend to look for new tools for my tool box. Sometimes my way doesn't work and I need something else to help me out. Being a facilitator for AVP has shown me ways to combat violence and how to use Transforming Power. It also has shown me ways to walk the walk with team members. Being in AVP is not just about certificates and completions. It is about team building and walking the walk as a whole. So walking the walk to me is about taking the next step and being there as support for other facilitators. Because I can't walk the walk alone. As a team we can fight the good fight together. By putting team needs together and work for the one common goal we become better and more knowledgeable.

Thank You AVP Family for being there when no one else would.

—Energetic Eugene, Eugene Hayes



David Daniel

AVP Level 1 (Basic) Workshop, June 7 + 14, 2014
Flushing Friends (Quaker) Meetinghouse, Flushing, Queens, NY

A year of renewal at Greene Prison

By Jim Pepler, Jazzy Jim, Outside AVP Coordinator

Prior to my arrival AVP at Greene was carried on the shoulders of Al Brophy and Virginia Osborn, who were an inspiration in orienting me, along with the support and mentoring of my hero—"Contagious Courageous Caring Carolyn" Polikarpus and "Ecological Ed" Kautz. With their encouragement and support I went into Greene to begin the learning process of being an "Outside Coordinator" of an AVP program in a prison.

There I found a Inmate "Team" consisting of two great ones—"Awesome Adam" Wright and "Smart (Chanel) Senor." "Awesome Adam" I call the "George Washington" of the current AVP Greene program. He has since graduated to 'returned citizen' status. "Smart Senor" I continue to call the "Grandfather" of the current "Greene Team", since he is our source of insight and wisdom.

From that beginning followed over a year of both life changing affirmations and experiences of joy, as well as many challenges, conflicts and miscues. However, we stayed on course, have persevered and in virtually every instance there have been solutions and resolutions of wonderful growth.

From the time of this photo (a first ever) of the "Greene Team" members assembled for an All-Facilitators Advanced Organizational Workshop (that I call a 'Level 4') we have grown to a cadre of thirteen inside Facilitators who selected (by consensus) two Clerks, and two Inside Coordinators, and are inspired to maintain a growing program of AVP at Greene.

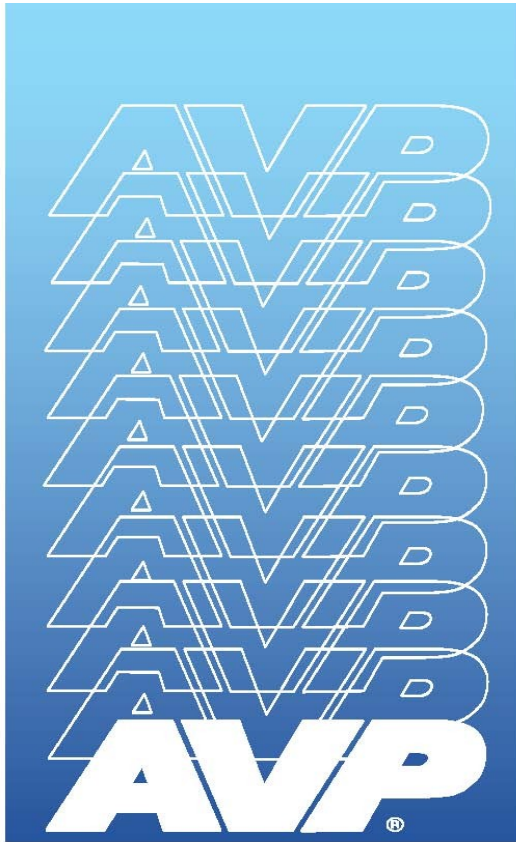


Timothy Maher

AVP Greene Team, All-Facilitator workshop, 01.21.14

Left to right: Front row: "Jazzy Jim" Pepler, Outside Coordinator; Jonathan "Common Cohen," Assistant Inside Coordinator; Ivan "Integrity Izzy" Mayo; "Joyful Joanie" Hunt.

Back row: "Loyal Luis" Pelaez, Inside Coordinator; Steven "Super SO" Price; "Committed Colleen" Sheehan; "Marvelous Marc" Grosskopf; "Interesting Isaiah" Williams, Emmanuel "Pleasant Parker;" James "Utmost Utley;" and "Rejoyful Reggie" Hampton. The drawing of "Awesome Adam" represents Adam Wright, Inside AVP Clerk who was transferred at the time of the photo and has since been released.



Robert Blair



AVP / NY's 2014 Forum Day at Groveland Prison
16 Inside Facilitators and 14 Outside Facilitators in a Texas Hug

Please support AVP!! Thank you very much!

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2013 Workshop Summary Report

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

ALBION Prison (Women's)	Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 28	GREEN HAVEN Prison	Workshop count: 29 Participant count: 395 Apprentices trained: 67	ALBANY Area Council	Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 22 Apprentices trained: 7	NIAGARA FRONTIER AC	Workshop count: 4 Youth participant count: 37 Adult participant count: 25 Mini Adult workshop count: 1 Mini Adult participant count: 5 Mini Youth workshop count: 9 Mini Youth participant count: 166
ATTICA Prison	Workshop count: 12 Participant count: 157	GREENE Prison	Workshop count: 12 Participant count: 110 Apprentices trained: 14	BRONX Area Council	Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 3	WESTCHESTER Area Council	Workshop count: 8 Youth participant count: 7 Adult participant count: 71 Mini Youth workshop count: 10 Mini Youth participant count: 155
AUBURN Prison	Workshop count: 16 Participant count: 219 Apprentices trained: 9	GROVELAND Prison	Workshop count: 11 Participant count: 134 Apprentices trained: 14	CENTRAL NY Area Council	Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 9	AVP / NEW JERSEY Community	Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 30
BEDFORD HILLS Prison (W's)	Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 16 Apprentices trained: 9	OTISVILLE Prison	English lang. workshop count: 7 Spanish lang. workshop count: 2 Participant count: 207 Mini workshop count: 3 Mini participant count: 66	ELMIRA Area Council	Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 18 Apprentices trained: 4	AVP/NY & NJ 2013 PRISON WRKSPS:	Prisons served: 16 Prison workshops: 175 Participant count: 2,199 Apprentices trained: 180 Inside facilitators: 191 Inside support (only): 16
CAYUGA Prison	Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 82 Apprentices trained: 8	SING SING Prison	English lang. workshop count: 27 Spanish lang. workshop count: 7 Participant count: 319 Apprentices trained: 10	GENESEE VALLEY AC	Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 30 Mini workshop count: 1 Mini participant count: 25	AVP/NY & NJ 2013 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS:	Community workshops: 31 Adult participant count: 217 Youth participant count: 91 Mini Youth workshops: 18 Mini Youth part't count: 264 Mini Adult workshops: 2 Apprentices trained: 13 Outside adult facilitators: 92
EDNA MAHAN Prison (W's) (NJ)	Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 82 Apprentices trained: 10	SULLIVAN Prison	Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 51	MID-HUDSON Area Council	Workshop count: 5 Youth participant count: 31 Adult participant count: 34 Apprentices trained: 4		
EASTERN Prison	Workshop count: 10 Participant count: 114	WENDE Prison	Workshop count: 8 Participant count: 120 Apprentices trained: 12	NYC Area Council	Workshop count: 3 Youth participant count: 10 Adult participant count: 9 Apprentices trained: 5		
GARDEN ST YOUTH Prison (NJ)	Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 90 Apprentices trained: 14	WOODBOURNE Prison	Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 82 Apprentices trained: 13				