

Fall, 2016



Introducing the AVP Cayuga Team!

AVP returned to Cayuga Prison in 2010 when Dancing Dee Nance and I started workshops with Busy Bill Sims, Charismatic Kurt Smithers and Natural Nick Catalfamo. That original team of five has shifted and grown to a team of twelve active inside and five active outside facilitators. I am so proud of the work we have done together and proud to call each of you my AVP family.

Why do I do AVP?

It's simple. AVP feeds my soul. And it makes me a better person.

For me, AVP is a spiritual practice. Each workshop is work but it is also a retreat from daily life—a retreat that awakens me to who I really am in this moment and makes clearer the trajectory I am on and where my work lies.

Workshops inside prison and outside in the communities are surprisingly similar. People are people and we all need what AVP provides—a safe place to discover my own truth, to practice what it means to live as non-violently as I am able on this day and to learn to ask for what I need.

I am grateful to the team at Cayuga. Your enthusiastic embrace of Transforming Power and letting that transformation shine for all who know you as best and as consistently as you are able is a powerful witness.

I am grateful to Larry Apsey and all the others who initiated AVP more than 41 years ago and to the Think Tank at Green Haven Prison who asked for AVP and shaped it into being.

AVP is now active in more than fifty countries on six continents. Please join us! You will be changed. That I can guarantee.

—Shirley Way a.k.a. Sincere Shirley,
AVP Outside Coordinator, Cayuga Prison

Please support this work !

Our budget for 2016 is \$48,500 and our income to date is \$24,823.

We need your support!

To donate on-line go to www.avpny.org

Thank you very much!!!

P.S. Three inside (incarcerated) facilitators have collectively donated \$20 in 2016! A Super Thank You to you!!



A Powerful Program

My name is Louis Laughing Wilner. My name indicates not only who I am but also who I can become.

AVP is awesome to me!! These brothers and sisters not only help me and other prisoners solve our problems but I became a better communicator with other individuals to help solve their problems. This is a life-changing experience that will help to act and deal with situations without using violent or any mean methods.

AVP is a rainbow of all different people coming together to build a beautiful world and a safe place for those who are misunderstood. That to me is a very POWERFUL PROGRAM.

That's a life experience that I am feeling amazing about! It has given me a whole new positive way of looking at myself and life and this world. I love this project because it teaches me the alternatives to violence. A diverse group of people that comes together to seek a common good in others no

matter what our backgrounds are. It has helped me push for better leadership and honesty among the youth and those adults who want to learn.



Louis

—Wilner, Louis a.k.a. Laughing Louis



The AVP Cayuga Team!
August, 2016



A whole new community to learn from, listen to and share with.

When I was 10 or 11, I remember my parents talking about a prisoner having escaped from Auburn Prison and alerts were broadcast to be

on the lookout for him. Shortly thereafter he was found, cold and damp, hiding in a barn hayloft, then safely returned to the prison. Upon reading the newspaper accounts I found out he was black, from New York City and in prison for stealing from a candy store. Somehow the punishment wasn't fitting the crime. This story has stuck with me for seven decades and may have subconsciously led me to explore social justice, incarceration, and AVP.

As a Quaker I have been aware of AVP and know people that have volunteered as coordinators over the years. About four years ago I decided it was something I wanted to commit to. I contacted Shirley Way and she led me through the process to become an AVP volunteer.

Once I leaped into this and shared the news with family and friends, there were some very strong reactions. They had concerns like "Why are you going into such a violent place? Are you safe? What do you do there?" Actually these were perfect questions to help convey the goals of AVP.

For me, Trusty Trudy, also Grandma Trudy, AVP has opened up a whole new community to learn from, listen to and share with. The participants have many stories to tell and work very hard to overcome the many causes that have brought them into the Correctional System. Their stories of lifelong hardships shared in our workshops are often difficult for me, not having experienced what they have. I leave every workshop amazed by the participants' desire to change their lives. They truly want to transform the negatives into positives in every aspect of life. They make me feel like a Queen, always welcoming and showing appreciation for my taking time to come.

I'll close with a comment that one of the inmates wrote on my affirmation poster. "Young Lady, thank you for your support. You could have been anywhere in the world this weekend but you choose to be with us."

If you are looking for a rewarding experience, do AVP!

—Trudy Buxenbaum a.k.a. Trusty Trudy,
also Grandma Trudy

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and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your purchase to AVP/NY whenever you shop on Amazon.



Desire to give back.

First and foremost I would like to give my special thanks to Sure Shirley and to everyone that I have encountered through my time participating in AVP. I was introduced to AVP in 2003 at Groveland Correctional Facility where I completed the Basic and Advanced workshops. AVP had an instant impact on my lifestyle, enhancing my insight, behavior and my communication skills with others.

In 2013, I was blessed to have met Sure Shirley, Kind Karen and Trusty Trudy. Their unbelievable care, compassion, dedication and knowledge towards AVP motivated me into following in their footsteps. Through their guidance, wisdom and love for AVP I was instantly inspired and began to share those same feelings. So my journey as an AVP facilitator began.

With God's blessing I will be released in January, 2016. With my newfound passion for AVP it's my plan and desire to give back to my community and all of society and share the beautiful, insightful and enriching experience that AVP has to offer. Gooooo AVP.

—Carlos Villalba a.k.a. Loyal Los



Learning to live life on life's terms.

First I want to say thanks for the opportunity to express my love and appreciation for AVP.

My introduction to AVP came from a fellow inmate. I guess he saw the anger and hostility I was displaying. He approached me with kindness and concern. He told me about a group of people who meet and share their problems. He also told me that in time I would deal with my issues with clarity and understanding. That was in the summer of 2014.

Today my love for my fellow man and mankind is almost full circle. Thanks to the volunteers who take the time to help those like myself.

I'll be returning home in the very near future and I will continue to participate in this fellowship and continue to learn living life on life's terms.

Thank you AVP for the unconditional love and help that you give.

Love and respect,

Hector M. Delgado, a.k.a. Humble Hec



Why I go into prison.

I remember the Attica up-rising and the violence with which it was put down. Appalled, I eventually became involved with Judicial Process Commission in Rochester in the late 70s when it was actively advocating for alternatives to incarceration and actually went back to graduate school in public policy with the intent of finding a way to close Attica. It became abundantly clear that closing Attica physically was beyond me and other advocates. But with AVP I can abolish prison for the two-and-a-half days that participants and facilitators are gathered to affirm self and others, enhance communication skills, build supportive community and experiment with the elements of transforming power.

I see the changes in the men, especially those who go on to become facilitators. They gain confidence. Men who were afraid to speak up in their basic workshop go on to lead exercises and light and livelies with gusto. Adjective names change as men deepen their sense of their own possibilities. Men offer support and information to one another and to the outsiders in our twice-monthly facilitators' meetings, developing a community within the prison focused on living abundantly.

And I change, thanks to the insights and supportive community of AVP. My adjective name is no longer Kind Karen but rather Questing Karen, as I recognize the places in myself where I fall short. I get to address these through skill building and reflection exercises. I rejoice in using the talents I have and in being part of a team that has other, critically needed talents. No matter how many basics I do, they are never the same even if the agendas are identical because AVP simply creates a container for profound (and fun) connection with others and with the sources of nonviolence.

—Karen Reixach a.k.a. Questing Karen



It took some time and a lot of tough love.

AVP has done so much for me by helping me learn how to deal with conflicts in a better and positive manner. It took me some time and a lot of tough love from my AVP family at Green Haven Correctional Facility and I must say it feels good to finally give in to Transforming Power all the way.

I would like to give thanks to Terrific Tyson for always seeing the best in me and wanting the best for me and to Carolyn Polikarpus (Triple C).

—Darnell Dexter a.k.a. Positive P.O.P.



With each workshop I feel lighter.

Hi! My name is Changing Charlie. I'm a 38 year old Native American and I'm serving a sentence of 5-15 years for vehicular manslaughter.

Before coming here to Cayuga Correctional Facility on August of 2015 I didn't know how to deal with the issues in my life. I used to wake up everyday mad because I was given another chance knowing that my friend Josh and his family will never again be able to experience all of the things that my family and I can still do.

With the help from my AVP family here at Cayuga, I am beginning to feel a lot better about myself. They have shown me the right way to deal with my problems from the past and the ones that will most likely come in the future.

With each workshop, I feel lighter and lighter because I can feel the weight of the past just falling away and that makes it easier to deal with. So now with each day that I'm given to wake up, I give thanks to my Creator for allowing my path to connect with the path of my AVP family.

Thank you AVP family. I pray that you are all blessed.

—Charles Jamieson a.k.a. Changing Charlie



Overcoming my adversities.

Peace and love to my AVP family.

I would like to first start by saying thank you to all participants as well as facilitators that share so much valuable information to help people such as myself overcome

my adversities to become a positive, wise and civilized man.

Before I found this beautiful and uplifting support group, I was in a very destructive place mentally that consisted of me resolving most of my problems or issues through violence. For many, many years I believed that this is who I am and who I will always be.

Today I can honestly and proudly say that I'm in a much better place mentally and it brings me so much peace and happiness.

I'm able to communicate with others in a much wiser manner to bring forth a positive and peaceful solution. I'm also able to identify with any type of negative energy and easily disassociate myself from this type of force.

Today I feel calm, relaxed, peaceful and very healthy mentally and spiritually. I know that if I continue to be a part of my AVP Community / family then tomorrow will bring forth the same results and much more.

Once again I thank everyone involved that helped me return to that elegant and divine state of righteousness and a special thanks to all the outside facilitators that take the time to share and support us.

—Jermaine Jamison a.k.a. Justice Jermaine



The parenting workshop

I just got to Cayuga from Woodbourne and our AVP family here welcomed me with open arms and hearts.

We just had a Parenting workshop and it was deep and very helpful for me. My son was five when I

came in March 5, 1990! He is 31 now. My wife is a trooper who, always no matter where I was, (I've been to every max [maximum security prison] except Sullivan, Southport and Wende.) came to visit me—trailers, regular visits, packages, phone calls, money in my commissary etc. You brothers who have been down 25 or more like me (I've got 26½ in) know exactly what I'm talking about.

Well my wife has been sick for eight years now so our son has stepped up big time. He takes care of her, our house and his house. But brothers he don't come see me! And for a long time I was extremely sad and hurt and just did not understand. But our workshop helped put me in his shoes. I see now he feels I left him and his mom. He is worried for our future what with being hit already with two years. He feels I can deal with it (my loneliness) plus he wants to make me feel how he feels and it's tough love. He is a good, honest young man and life is not easy for him. I see all this now and I love him and respect him more for it. Also I've learned actions speak louder than words.

So God willing (and the parole board) I'll make my January 2017 board and be able to help him out. Just to take some of his burden, load, bills and his loneliness off his shoulders. The AVP Parenting workshop opened my eyes and heart to my son's feelings problems and worries.

I will endeavor to use All my skills, love and respect now and when I'm paroled.

Peace and God bless you all. Be well, strong and happy.

—Mike Messina a.k.a. Miracle Mike



It's never too late.

AVP has really blessed my life with meaning and purpose. It has given me the tools to be a man and show me how to live life on life's terms.

AVP has made me a better person with added characteristics such as

being a better listener, parent and most of all showed me how to forgive. The Transforming Power mandala has shaped and formed my thinking. AVP has taught me how to restrain my ego and how to place character over image. Today I am grateful and have self-esteem.

AVP has taught me that it's never too late. I am proud to be a part of the AVP family and movement. I am proud to be an AVP facilitator. Thank you AVP for giving me hope, strength and the courage to change. AVP is wonderful.

—Willie Hogan a.k.a. Wonderful Will



True story.

AVP has been a great part of my life. I facilitated my first workshop (Special Topic Advanced on Parenting) and to tell you the truth, I loved every minute of it. I had the pleasure to facilitate with a great bunch of individuals. True story.

Being a part of this Parenting workshop was such an eye-opener and very, very informative. I have three boys (Boy, Papi and Jay) and one girl (P.J.). I've had the opportunity to see my three boys grow into fine young men and men. This is because of my wife Love. I thank you for that. True story. If I didn't know any better I would of swore my wife has taken AVP Parenting before. True story! Regardless how mad she has been at me, Love always said, "Our kids don't have anything to do with our debates, misunderstandings etc."

The Parenting workshop taught me all children want is time, Love. Which I already knew. Nevertheless, to hear it from someone else made a world of difference. Another thing I've learned from my AVP family is even though my kids will think I'm older than dirt I can still learn from my children. One of the most important things from this workshop is listening to your children. Not everything takes a million dollars. Throwing the football around, going to a movie or just watching TV means a great deal to children. You show them love and they will do the same, lots more. True story.

I want to thank my AVP family for changing my life.

Horray AVP.

—Kevin Williams a.k.a. Working Willie



Jumpin' Jill McLellan and Kind Kali Williams in Buffalo, NY. Kind Kali is recently returned from Wende and serves on the board of the Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Non-Violence.



I believe in self-determinism.

I believe we have a personal responsibility to make ourselves into who we want to be and, thereby, we play a pivotal role in who we become. To this extent, AVP affords its participants a fertile at-

mosphere, a welcoming community, a host of tools and a meaningful opportunity to become better people.

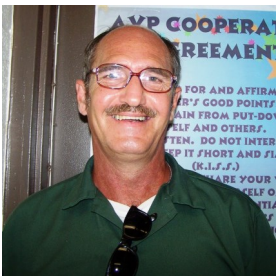
In the Social Sciences, we learn that our social settings and the experiences that we are exposed to affect our development in all sorts of ways. Too often, prison affects its inhabitants in the most negative ways, and often via unremedied systemic conditions. Yet AVP offers a break away from the normalcy of abnormalcy and to an experience that I've observed reach guys at their core. This in turn motivates them to truly become better for no other reward than genuinely wanting to become better people. In short, AVP gives us the space, both internal and external, to advance up Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Thus, as for me, AVP continues to be an oft-repeating provision along the way toward better becoming who I have the potential to be—one whose life has purpose and meaning beyond just myself. I believe that we live in an interconnected and interdependent web of self and others, where we each contribute something to one another. AVP offers the chance of capturing our own transforming power and to participate in others' lives in a way that helps them capture theirs too.

From one perspective, AVP workshops are redemptive to us who've hurt others (including ourselves) in the past. From another perspective, the workshops are enriching to us who are willing to invest in ourselves each weekend that a workshop lasts. So, for me, AVP means the mandala upon which it stands.



—Aurel Smith a.k.a. Actualizing Aurel



So that I can help others.

I was a truck driver for sixteen years. My passion was to see the country and to be away from others.

When I first came into the system, I inquired about parenting classes but I was told that there was no group. During this time period I was working on my High School Equivalency/GED. Well I finally passed it at the age of 47. I also took the other mandated programs: A.R.T. (Anger Replacement Therapy), ASAT (Alcohol and Substance Abuse Treatment) and completed my vocational trade as well.

Since I came to this facility in 2015 I had signed up for the Basic AVP and a Non-Violent Communication Skills program which taught me how to communicate better with others in a nonviolent way.

Then the Parenting workshop came up and I was all into it to learn more on how to communicate with my kids and grandkids and to be more understanding and even more loving to all of them.

Then I took the Training for Facilitators workshop so that I can help others. I have even helped a friend throughout this learning experience who lives in another state that is about 1,900 miles away from here. I am very glad that I could help her. I gave her advice and leads to find other help in her area. This is why I enjoy the AVP Parenting workshop—so I can help many other people. I have a great instructor Sincere Shirley Way.

My blessings go to the AVP program.

—Michael Hoffman a.k.a. Motivated, Mighty and now Mysterious Mike



With the support of my team members...

I did my first Basic AVP workshop in September of 2015. I liked it so much that I have completed the Advanced as well as the Training for Facilitators workshops.

In February 2016 I facilitated my first Basic AVP workshop. Truthfully I was not comfortable talking in front of strangers. With the support of my team members I made it with flying colors and it felt really good to do something out of my normal.

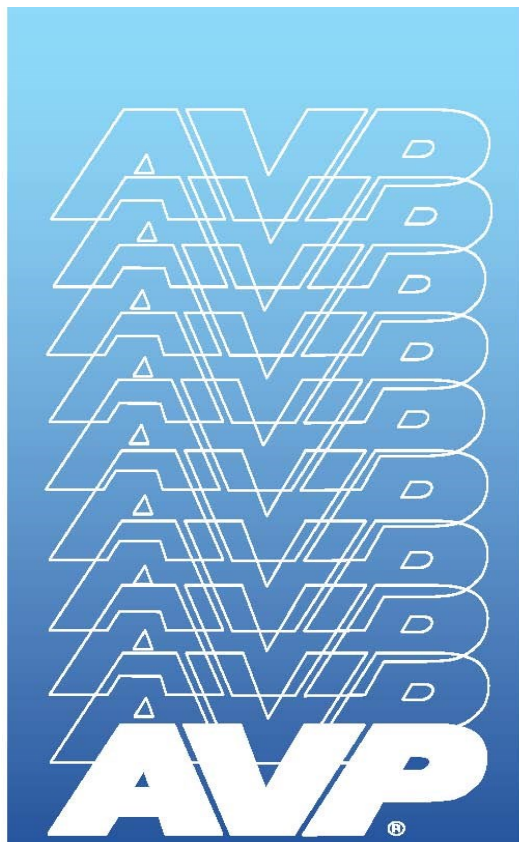
I have attended Special Topic workshops such as Trauma Resilience and Parenting. These topics are deep and meaningful. With confidentiality I was able to open up and speak about some of my traumatic issues in my life. In the Parenting workshop I was able to reflect on how I was brought up and how I carried some of those same ways to raising my daughter.

Each workshop is a learning experience. Communication is an important skill I have been working on. Listen to what the other person says without interruption. The first time I did an exercise on listening, I had a hard time keeping my mouth shut. Now with practice every day it has become easier to listen before speaking. From the [Transforming Power] mandala the one piece that sticks out the most is: Think Before Reacting. I have been practicing every day. I do slip every so often.

Overall I like the gatherings, all of the exercises, role plays and the light and livelies. I like everything about AVP.

My goal is to hold an AVP workshop in or around the Syracuse, NY area after I am released from prison.

—James Gapski a.k.a. Joyful Jim



ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

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



*Inside this
issue*

*Meet the
AVP Cayuga
Prison
Team!*

Please support AVP!! Thank you very much !

Return Service Requested

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT / NEW YORK

2015 Workshop Summary Report

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

ALBION Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 35 ATTICA Prison Workshop count: 11 Participant count: 209 Mini workshop count: 1 Mini participant count: 10 Apprentices trained: 10 AUBURN Prison Workshop count: 12 Participant count: 175 Apprentices trained: 9 BEDFORD HILLS Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 72 Apprentices trained: 9 CAYUGA Prison Workshop count: 8 Participant count: 95 Mini workshop count: 1 Mini participant count: 20 Apprentices trained: 9 EASTERN Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 96 Apprentices trained: 15 ELMIRA Prison Workshop count: 13 Participant count: 160 Apprentices trained: 21 FCI RAY BROOK (Federal Prison) Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 21	GREEN HAVEN Prison Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 67 GREENE Prison Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 49 Apprentices trained: 5 GROVELAND Prison Workshop count: 12 Participant count: 139 Mini workshop w/ staff: 1 Mini staff participant count: 24 Apprentices trained: 10 OTISVILLE Prison English lang. wksp count: 7 Spanish lang. wksp count: 1 Participant count: 121 Apprentices trained: 14 SING SING Prison English lang. wksp count: 28 Spanish lang. wksp count: 4 Participant count: 449 Apprentices trained: 13 SULLIVAN Prison Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 65 Mini workshop count: 2 Mini participant count: 12 Apprentices trained: 3 WENDE Prison English lang. workshop count: 3 Bi-lingual workshop count: 1 Participant count: 97	WOODBOURNE Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 86 AVP/NY's Forum Day: 28 ALBANY Area Council Mini workshop count: 1 Mini participant count: 7 CATSKILL Area Council Youth workshop count: 3 Youth participant count: 48 Mini adult workshop count: 1 Mini adult participant count: 13 Youth apprentices trained: 13 GENESEE VALLEY AC Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 10 NIAGARA FRONTIER AC Adult workshop count: 1 Adult participant count: 6 Youth workshop count: 1 Youth participant count: 11 Adult mini workshop count: 1 Adult mini participant count: 11 Youth mini workshop count: 1 Youth mini participant count: 8 WESTCHESTER Area Council English lang. wksp count: 6 Bilingual/Spanish wksp count: 2 Adult participant count: 83 Youth workshop count: 1 Youth participant count: 10 Mini workshop count: 2 Mini participant count: 40 Mini Youth intro count: 23	WESTCHESTER AC cont'd. Mini Youth intro part't count: 405 Facilitator Days: 2 Facilitator Day participants: 27 Apprentices trained: 7 AVP/NY PRISON WKSPs: Prisons served: 16 Workshops in English: 131 Workshops in Spanish: 5 All-facilitator workshop count: 4 Workshop count: 140 Participant count: 1,936 Mini workshop count: 5 Mini participant count: 54 Apprentices trained: 125 Inside facilitators: 281 Outside adult facilitators: 77 AVP/NY COMMUNITY WKSPs: Community workshops: 15 Participant count: 168 Adult part't count: 99 Youth part't count: 69 Apprentices trained: 20 Adult apprentices: 7 Youth apprentices: 13 Mini Adult workshops: 5 Mini Adult part't count: 71 Mini Youth workshops: 1 Mini Youth part't count: 8 Mini Youth introduction: 23 Mini Youth intro part't: 405 Facilitator Days: 2 Facilitator Day part't count: 27 Outside adult facilitators: 77 Youth facilitators (under 18): 13
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