

Some of AVP Attica's Team of Facilitators Speak of AVP



I have been involved with AVP since 1994 and through the course of many basic and advanced "repeat" workshop, I decided to take my T4F (training for facilitators workshop) in 2001.

My experience with AVP has been very extensive and rewarding. It is in these workshops that I was allowed to explore and work on my character and behavioral patterns that often led to physical altercations.

AVP philosophy has provided me with some powerful tools to put in my tool box. One very important tool that I strive to utilize daily is "TRANSFORMING POWER". Transforming power is a power that we have in ourselves to change ourselves and the shape of many situations. For everyone that has ever shared a Forum Day or workshop with me, you have all become a part of my family. Continue passing along the AVP torch.

— Dexter Turner, a.k.a. Transforming Tahiem

AVP gives me a new sense of direction and hope which allows me to think before I act.

— Ramal Davis, a.k.a. Ravishin' Ra

AVP has helped me to control my violence and help others.

— Aaron Biting, a.k.a. Action A.B.

AVP helps me stay non-violent in life.

— Fred Wooten, a.k.a. Free Fred

A Wonderful New Video by Blaze Nowara:

"When you hear the word VIOLENCE"



Features inside and outside facilitators at Garden State Prison and interviews of AVP people from across the U.S. Find it on our home page:

www.avpny.org

Thank you Burning Blaze!!



John Shuford

AVP/USA Annual Gathering 2011 in New Windsor, MD
May 25– 28. Thirteen AVP New Yorkers helped make it great!!

Forum Day 2012 at Attica

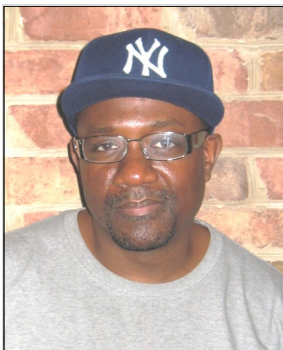


Ahhhh - Forum Day 2012! Feel the Love! What a delight to have had the opportunity to gather with our fellow facilitators from inside Attica and from all over NYS in this historical institution. As Positive Peter Reiss pointed out, AVP owes its start in part to the response to the uprising at Attica in the mid-seventies, so having the chance to experience Forum Day here brings AVP/NY full circle, continuing the ripples of love that started in Green Haven in 1975. *Hurray!*

This year's Forum Day came together quickly; the Attica Home Team found out in February that we were being given the gift of hosting our compadres from around the state on Saturday, March 25th. Thanks to the support of our Staff Liaison, Dynamic Dan O'Connor, in addition to using the regular monthly Attica AVP Maintenance meeting, we were able to schedule two extra planning meetings. At our first get-together, we brainstormed topics we wanted to explore, skills to hone and home-grown exercises that we could share. Out of that mix came the Agenda. We modified traditional AVP exercises to look at challenging situations we have experienced while facilitating.

On the day itself, we were blessed with the usual myriad of challenges, but with a wonderful turnout of nine Inside Facilitators and eighteen Outside Facilitators we were able to handle the chilly gym and loud heater fans to come together and learn and grow with our AVP family.

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I can remember as if only yesterday, when the facilitator in my basic workshop methodically laid out the guides to transforming power. While it was a foreign concept to me, I instantly felt a connection to the idea of "risk being creative rather than violent". I figured I'd give it a try, after all, what did I have to lose? I would stay up in the wee hours writing poetry. I wrote over two hundred. I had heard before that all good things must come to an end. Fortunately all bad things come to an end as well. Just days before I was released fresh off a twenty-five year bid, I completed my final and most introspective piece yet, called closer to the end than the beginning.

—Nurideen Islam a.k.a. Now or Never Nurideen is Vice President of AVP New York. He was instrumental in starting AVP workshops in the Bronx last year and is currently involved in starting a program in Brooklyn and offers workshops to youth in Poughkeepsie.

CLOSER TO THE END THAN THE BEGINNING

By Nurideen Khalil Islam

I'm sitting here poised for the sake of sanity,
thinking about how I fit in with the rest of humanity.
This solitude couldn't come at a more opportune time,
It's like I'm a million miles away something along those lines.
For all that life gives us which never goes wrong,
Finding heavenly bliss is a process that stays true to form.
We find salvation in religion, there's a thousand to choose from,
so pray hard and hope that you make the right decision.
I lost many battles in life, this one I'm winning,
Closer to the end than the beginning.

Lord, you know what I was! Your good grace coming when it does.
Direct my path, if ever I fail in the calculation of your blessings, help me
with the math.

I'm closer than I ever was, closer than I ever thought I'd be,
Could this signal the beginning of the end for me.
Last night when I knelt in prayer, for the first time I felt you near.
You know I had my doubts, I questioned you, and pessimism spewed
from my mouth.

I bored disappointing conclusions to the point my eyes could hardly bear,
At a glance, just a blank stare.
I lost many battles in life, this one I'm winning,
Closer to the end than the beginning.

If I could look into my last day, just catch a glimmer,
As profound as it may be, would it make me tremor?
I want to make things right before my time expire,
And I hope and pray that it all don't backfire,
Because there linger a few old nemeses,
But more than anything, I'm standing on new premises.
I'm in for the long haul, after all is tabulated,
I can stand before you and say, I finally made it!
I lost many battles in life, this one I'm winning,
Closer to the end than the beginning.

Forum Day 2012 at Attica *continued from page 1.*

All involved were delighted with the good mix of spiritually reinvigorating, personally affirming and skills-refreshing work presented in the exercises led by our brothers in Attica. Despite our time getting cut short by over an hour, it was a great day. Best of all was the hospitality shown by the Attica Home Team, spreading the love to those who attended from the outside. Big Thank You's also to Dan O'Connor and Eileen Wegman for their work in making the day possible.

—Marie Hickey, a.k.a. Musical Marie is Outside Co-Coordinator for AVP Attica.



Living AVP: Remembering Ray Barnes

By Jill McLellan

Ray Barnes, a.k.a. Sensational Shakim, a former AVP inside coordinator at Auburn, passed away recently, leaving a large hole in the re-entry work done in New York State. Reflecting on his life, I thought of some of the guides to Transforming Power and how he embodied them.

Be willing to suffer for what is important. Ray was rather a legend in Auburn for never once going to commissary in his 27 years of incarceration. He was not going to give his money to DOCS; instead he sent it all home to his wife Lorraine to help purchase their house in Auburn. If he needed something, he would trade for it or do without.

Learn to trust your inner sense of when to act. Ray was very concerned about the safety and welfare of children. He was a major part of the Youth Assistance Program (YAP) in Auburn and counseled teachers, parents and probation officers in helping youth at risk. If a child seemed to be troubled, he advised that an adult ask him or her to draw a picture or find one in a magazine to indicate what is going on. Recognizing and reporting abuse is too much to expect from a child, he said. He also suggested using Light and Livelies in the visiting room as he had with his daughter Roxie both for fun and to help her learn her alphabet and math facts.

Be patient and persistent. Ray shared that he had lost contact with some of his family members following his incarceration but that he kept up the letters and cards, especially to nieces and nephews, who were not old enough to make decisions about who should be in their lives and who should not. Sure enough, when they were older, these nieces and nephews reached out to him. It didn't seem to bother him that it would take years; he seemed to know and accept that.

Build a community based on honesty, respect and caring. For Ray, community was all about love. Ray's first speaking engagement shortly after his release in 2005 was at the school where I teach.

The administration had no problem allowing Ray to speak to the students soon after his release because teachers had met him through the YAP program and they trusted him. This was a follow-up to community building (AVP) workshops held at school. Ray began all of his public addresses with and repeated several times during the course of a workshop: "My beloved brothers and my beloved sisters...". All people were beloved to Ray. It didn't matter if you were a judge, a correctional officer, a teacher, youth at risk or wearing state greens. His passionate speaking engagements continued as he worked for the Center for Community Alternatives in Syracuse as a case manager. He spoke to district attorneys and people in power regarding parole-- a long way from YAP and AVP but then not really. Ray loved people, listening to them, laughing with them, leading "Lean on Me" at the end of workshops with his beautiful voice and above all, cherishing his family. I cannot think of a better legacy.

Jill McLellan a.k.a. Jumpin' Jill is Co-President of AVP New York and is the outside coordinator for AVP at Auburn Prison.

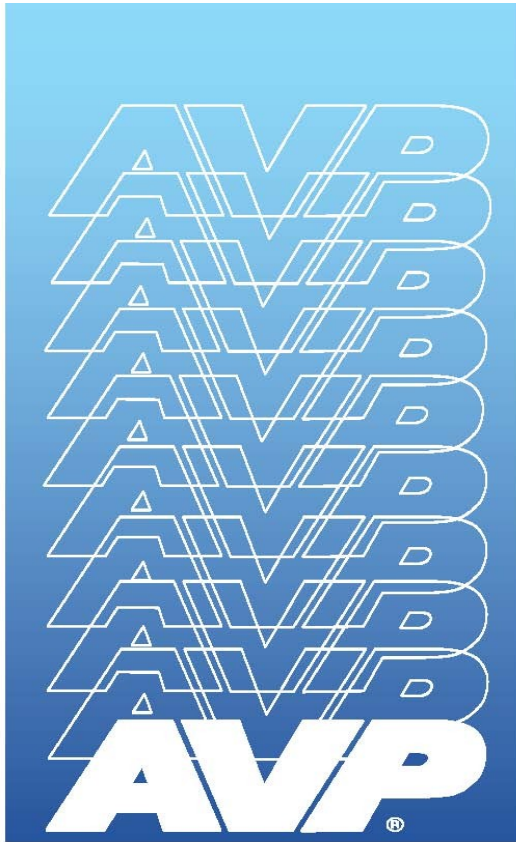


AVP New York facilitators at the AVP International Gathering in Antigua, Guatemala, October 1-8, 2011. Front row (left to right): Shirley Way, Deb Wood, Linda Hartka-Reiss, Carolyn Polikarpus. Second row: Yanina Calderon, Natalie Braun, Margaret Lechner, John Gallagher. Third row: Peter Reiss, Laurie Scott and Henry Rivera.

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Send checks to AVP New York (address on pg. 4) or on-line at www.avpny.org

Thank you very much !



ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT

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**Come to:
AVP/NY's Annual Gathering!**

at Powell House
Old Chatham, NY

September 7-9
(Friday to Sunday)

Look for program and registration materials on our website: www.avpny.org.



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2011 Workshop Summary Report

ALBION Prison (Women's) Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 78	GREEN HAVEN Prison English lang. wksp. count: 27 Spanish lang. wksp. count: 2 Participant count: 314 Apprentices trained: 76	WENDE Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 101 Apprentices trained: 11	MID-HUDSON Area Council Workshop count: 1 Youth participant count: 33 Adult participant count: 5
ARTHUR KILL Prison Workshop count: 3 Participant count: 38	GREENE Prison Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 36 Apprentices trained: 4	WOODBOURNE Prison English lang. wksp count: 7 Spanish lang. wksp count: 2 Participant count: 138 Apprentices trained: 20	NIAGARA FRONTIER AC Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 7
ATTICA Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 73	GROVELAND Prison Workshop count: 8 Participant count: 100 Apprentices trained: 13	ALBANY Area Council Workshop count: 1 Youth participant count: 3 Adult participant count: 4	WESTCHESTER Area Council Workshop count: 6 Adult participant count: 38 Youth participant count: 26 Youth apprentices trained: 4
AUBURN Prison Workshop count: 13 Participant count: 186 Apprentices trained: 5	MID-ORANGE Prison Workshop count: 1 Participant count: 6	BRONX Area Council Workshop count: 5 Participant count: 90 Apprentices trained: 9 Mini Workshop count: 2 Mini Participant count: 19	2011 PRISON WORKSHOPS:
BEDFORD HILLS Prison (W's) English lang. wksp. count: 11 Bilingual wksp. count: 1 Participant count: 106 Apprentices trained: 19	OTISVILLE Prison Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 39 Apprentices trained: 13	CATSKILL Area Council Workshop count: 3 Youth participant count: 60 Youth apprentices trained: 20 Mini Youth workshops: 20 Mini Youth participants: 500	Prisons served: 17
BUTLER Prison Workshop count: 7 Participant count: 50 Apprentices trained: 4	SING SING Prison English lang. wksp count: 29 Spanish lang. wksp. count: 2 Participant count: 366 Apprentices trained: 20	GENESEE VALLEY AC Workshop count: 2 Participant count: 31 Mini workshop count: 1 Mini participant count: 9	Prison workshops: 159
CAYUGA Prison Workshop count: 9 Participant count: 85 Apprentices trained: 9	SULLIVAN Prison Workshop count: 6 Participant count: 67 Apprentices trained: 7		Participant count: 1,825
EASTERN Prison Workshop count: 4 Participant count: 42			Apprentices trained: 201
			Inside facilitators: 205
			2011 COMMUNITY WRKSPS:
			Community workshops: 19
			Participant count: 297
			Mini workshops: 23
			Mini participant count: 528
			Apprentices trained: 33
			Youth facilitators: 27
			Outside adult facilitators: 93